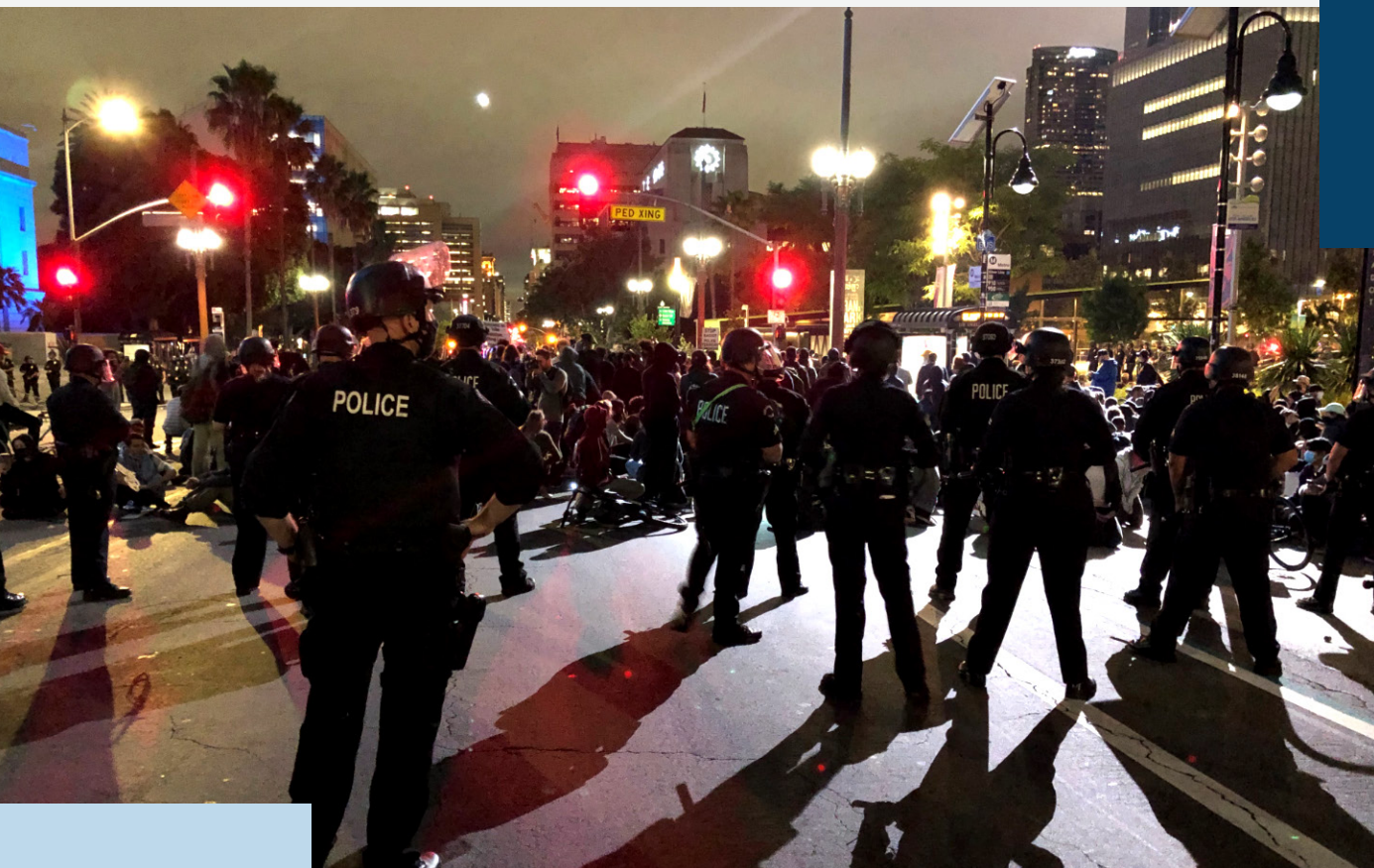


A CRISIS OF TRUST

A National Police Foundation Report
to the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners on
the Los Angeles Police Department Response to
First Amendment Assemblies and Protests Occurring
May 27 – June 7, 2020



Disclaimer

The analyses, findings, and recommendations contained herein are those of the National Police Foundation (NPF) assessment team and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Los Angeles Police Foundation (LAPF), the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), or the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners (LABOPC). References to specific agencies, companies, products, or services should not be considered an endorsement by the

authors, contributors, or the LAPF, LAPD, or LABOPC. Rather, the references are illustrations to supplement discussion of the issues.

The Internet references cited in this publication are valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the authors, the NPF, the LAPF, LAPD, or LABOPC can vouch for their current validity.

Statement of Independence

As a nonpartisan and non-member organization, the NPF strives to remain independent in all of its after-action reviews. The NPF has maintained independence throughout this review and assessment of the LAPD's response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests in the summer of 2020. As stated in its agreement with the Los Angeles Police Foundation and the LAPD:



As the report is independent (and not funded by the Commission), the findings and conclusions of the report shall be those of the NPF. The NPF is not aware of any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interests related to this agreement or the project. Should we become aware of such an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, we will notify the Commission of such as well as the project's funder, the Los Angeles Police Foundation.

The NPF, to the fullest extent possible, will base its findings and conclusions on the data and records provided by the LAPD or other reliable information. Our purpose is not to find fault or place blame or to investigate any allegation

or claim of wrongdoing, but to identify lessons learned and best practices that may be used to improve future responses of the LAPD or other law enforcement agencies across the U.S.

The NPF team will independently assess LAPD's response to mass demonstrations, protests, and First Amendment assemblies that occurred between May 27, 2020 and June 7, 2020, from a variety of perspectives that includes LAPD personnel, community-based organizations, elected officials, the local business community, LAPD staff involved in command and control operations, as well as additional stakeholders.”¹

While the NPF assessment team has engaged with the LABOPC and LAPD throughout the review, at no point did either body influence the outcomes or findings of the report. Additionally, the NPF assessment team did not discuss any of the specific findings or recommendations or otherwise collaborate with any NPF contributors or partners.

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¹ National Police Foundation. (2020, August 11). Award Letter to Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners.

Acknowledgements

Having conducted a critical review of LAPD's response to the unrest following the Rodney King use of force incident, the National Police Foundation was asked by the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners (LABOPC) to conduct an independent after-action review of the Los Angeles Police Department's response to First Amendment assemblies and protests in Los Angeles during the period May 27– June 7, 2020. The Los Angeles Police Foundation provided funding to support the review.

Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Chief Moore, his command staff, and the LAPD Office of Constitutional Policing and Policy (OCP) provided access to LAPD materials and resources, contact information for LAPD personnel and community stakeholders, and information related to the department's response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

LAPD personnel, family members of LAPD personnel, City elected officials, and community members participated in interviews, focus groups, and open listening sessions. Their experiences, feedback, and recommendations were invaluable.

This review demonstrates the commitment of the LABOPC and the LAPD to reimagining policing in the City of Los Angeles, to addressing challenges in community-police interactions, and protecting First Amendment assemblies and protests. In requesting this review, the LABOPC and the LAPD recognize that to advance and improve policing in the City of Los Angeles, they must engage in rigorous internal and external processes to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in their response to First Amendment assemblies and protests.



About the National Police Foundation

Established in 1970 through a grant from the Ford Foundation, the National Police Foundation (NPF) is the oldest nationally known 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan, and non-membership-driven organization dedicated to improving American policing. Born out of widespread tensions that had reached their peak following the Civil Rights Movement that resulted in public protests, riots, and other civil disruptions nationwide, NPF was a mechanism for a reasoned approach through application of scientific principles and understanding of police procedure to examine and improve policing nationwide. Independent of political encumbrances, NPF operated with independence and objectivity in a time when political influences continued to be strong and gripping.

Through time, NPF's growing portfolio of scientific research and experiments remains the catalyst for significant changes in policing, informing scholars and practitioners alike, and serves as a model for the systematic examination of real-world challenges. Over the course of the last 50 years, NPF

has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure, and continues leading efforts in new evidence-based practices and innovations to law enforcement.

To accomplish its mission—Advancing Policing Through Innovation and Science—NPF works closely with public safety and criminal justice agencies across the country and around the world. One area of focus has been to increase institutional and community learning through independent, comprehensive after-action reviews of critical incidents such as mass violence, officer involved shootings, and mass demonstrations. Over the last decade, the NPF has completed dozens of these reviews, committing to an honest, balanced, informed approach to evaluation, and to providing this information to stakeholders nationwide in its [library of after-action reviews](#). The NPF continues to add to this library in an effort to share lessons that contribute to the advancement of policing nationwide.

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National Police Foundation Assessment Team Members

Subject Matter Experts



Reverend Jeffrey
Brown

Reverend Brown is a nationally recognized leader and expert in coalition-building, gangs, youth, and urban violence reduction. He has over 20 years of experience of gang mediation and intervention and developing dialogues in police/community relations in the United States and around the world. His work builds on the idea that while community policing is an effective policing tool, in many urban areas, the relations between the urban, often minority community and law enforcement is poor, which inhibits effective policing and prevents the community from getting the quality of life it deserves. Rev. Brown's experience has led to his successful work nationally in cities like Boston, Massachusetts; Camden, New Jersey; and Salinas, California to help build a strong community component into any public safety crime reduction strategy. He is one of the co-founders of the Boston Ten Point Coalition, a faith-based group that was an integral part of the "Boston Miracle"—a process where the city experienced a 79% decline in violent crime in the 90s—and spawned countless urban collaborative efforts in subsequent years that followed the Boston Ceasefire model.



Chief (retired) Robert
C. White

With almost 50 years of experience, Chief White has experience in almost every area of policing. He has led both the Denver Police Department and the Louisville Metropolitan Police Departments over his career. He began his career with the Metropolitan Washington DC Police Department in 1972.



Commissioner
(retired) Charles H.
"Chuck" Ramsey

Commissioner Ramsey has been at the forefront of developing innovative policing strategies and leading organizational change for the past 35 years. He brings over 50 years of knowledge, experience and service in advancing the law enforcement field. He has led three major police departments, including the Chicago Police Department (1997-2007), the Metropolitan Washington DC Police Department (1998-2007), and the Philadelphia Police Department (2008 – 2016). Following this tenure, Ramsey was tapped by President Obama to lead the *President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*. His work in police organizational change and reform continues under his company, 21CP.

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Executive Summary

The National Context

The past year, 2020, was by many measures an unprecedented year. The COVID-19 pandemic, political discourse and rising tensions amid ideological divisions, public frustration and anxiety, and a growing intensity and spotlight on racial justice took center stage in communities across the United States. Then, the May 25, 2020, death of George Floyd³ ignited protests and civil unrest. The protests spanned across communities large and small and engaged a broad spectrum of people across racial and ethnic divides⁴. Similar protests in cities and communities – large and small, urban and suburban, East and West—across the United States voiced mistrust and frustration regarding police interactions within communities of color as well as the growing tension, not just within those communities, but in all communities. Protests were amplified and tensions heightened as the issues became a part of the national political debate.



Protests in Los Angeles

The City of Los Angeles (LA) and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has had experience with First Amendment events, protests and riots over several decades. In 1992, the Rodney King riots in the LAPD's South Bureau provided lessons regarding the importance of police-community relations, training, crowd control, and the need for de-escalation in tense crowd situations⁵. To some extent, because of the work LAPD has done to engage the community since 1992, and because the death of Mr. Floyd did not happen in LA, members of the LAPD command staff and City elected officials indicated to the NPF assessment team that they didn't expect the protests to erupt in violence.

In fact, the LAPD and elected officials believed that they had developed and implemented an effective strategy to facilitate and protect First Amendment assemblies and protests, often in collaboration with activists in the LA community. Therefore, officials were surprised by the intensity and scope of the unrest, and while they were prepared for large First Amendment assemblies, they did not anticipate—or prepare for—the violence that erupted.

³The Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office Autopsy Report diagnosed the death as a homicide caused by "cardiopulmonary arrest complicating law enforcement subdual, restraint, and neck compression." See: Hennepin County. (2020, May 26). https://www.scribd.com/document/464472105/Autopsy-2020-3700-Floyd#fullscreen&from_embed. Derek Michael Chauvin has been charged with Second Degree Murder – Unintentional – While Committing A Felony, Third Degree Murder – Perpetrating Eminently Dangerous Act and Evincing Depraved Mind, and Second Degree Manslaughter – Culpable Negligence Creating Unreasonable Risk. See: State of Minnesota v. Derek Michael Chauvin. (2020, June 3). US District Court, Fourth Judicial District. <https://mncourts.gov/mncourtsgov/media/High-Profile-Cases/27-CR-20-12646/AmendedComplaint06032020.pdf>.

⁴Fisher, Dana R. (2020, July 8). "The diversity of the recent Black Lives Matter protests is a good sign for racial equity." The Brookings Institution. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2020/07/08/the-diversity-of-the-recent-black-lives-matter-protests-is-a-good-sign-for-racial-equity/>

⁵Webster, William H. and Hubert Williams. (1992, October 21). The City in Crisis: A Report by the Special Advisor to the Board of Police Commissioners on the Civil Disorder in Los Angeles. <https://www.policefoundation.org/publication/the-city-in-crisis/>

Community Perceptions of the LAPD Response

Some community members detailed accounts of police aggression during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, including using “chemicals” and rubber bullets (**see Less-Lethal Weapons beginning on page 25 of this report**), hitting protesters with batons, and kettling (**see Mass Arrests beginning on page 29 of this report**) to effect mass arrests as a method of crowd control. One community member suggested that the LAPD response, “was no surprise to me although it was shocking and I will never forget this incredibly scarring event in my life.”⁶ Others, however, perceived that while the department is generally proactive in responding to crime and safety issues particularly in the downtown area, LAPD did not do enough to stop the looting and destruction of local businesses during some of the events—which may have suggested to some that a higher level of tolerance may exist and that violence and destruction of property would be tolerated. Finally, the National Police Foundation (NPF) assessment team heard from some community members who referenced positive interactions with the LAPD during the protests. These community members reported that LAPD personnel responded and “did the best that they could” given chaotic and fluid situations⁷. They acknowledged the violence being directed at officers that worked the line and described officers being yelled at and having frozen water bottles, rocks, and other items thrown at them⁸. These community members believed that the aggressive tactics used by LAPD were in reaction to aggressive tactics used by protesters that may have been trying to incite a violent response⁹.

LAPD members involved in the response described to the NPF assessment team a department with some of the most highly-skilled, highly-trained members in the country. At the same time, they noted that at the beginning of the protests—specifically on May 28, 29, and 30—the department was unable to coordinate, mobilize and disperse the crowds, or effectively stop the destruction. After the third day, LAPD members described being better resourced and deployed within a strategy that allowed community members to exercise their First Amendment rights safely and peacefully.

Families of LAPD members expressed that these events have taken a significant toll on LAPD members and their families. LAPD members and their families are exhausted; they and their families feel isolated; they are demoralized by the lack of support from public, City, and department leadership; and, are frustrated by their perceived inability to do the job they are trained to do. They described missed or ignored opportunities that the City and the department had to counter destructive narratives, and to tell the department’s story about the work they do every day to protect the city.

⁶ NPF assessment team Community Listening session. February 4, 2021. By policy, LAPD does not deploy projectile chemical munitions, but officers are issued individual OC spray canisters.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ NPF assessment team interview with Business Improvement District representative. January 25, 2021.

⁹ See footnote 6.

Summary Statement of Findings

Through its review of the LAPD response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred between May 27 and June 7, 2020, the NPF assessment team makes 22 findings, each of which are discussed in greater detail within the report:

LAPD Provisions and Training Relevant to First Amendment Assemblies and Protests

Finding 1.1: Following the violent Rodney King protests in South LA in 1992, the LAPD made significant changes to their protocols in response to civil unrest, setting a national model for law enforcement policy and training.

Finding 1.2: LAPD, like many police departments across the country had well-developed crowd management policies and practices that had proven successful during previous events. Those policies and practices were inadequate to handle the disparate groups, or to identify leaders amongst the protesters and address the level of violence.

Finding 1.3: Although it aligned with LAPD's use of force provisions and procedures, documentation of uses of force during protests and demonstrations—including the deployment of less lethal munitions—was inconsistent by LAPD members.

Finding 1.4: Some LAPD personnel had not been provided contemporary training on crowd management, mobile field force, supervision, de-escalation, or the use of less-lethal instruments prior to the First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations from May 27 through June 7, 2020.

Finding 1.5: During the initial days of the protest, the number of disparate groups, the pace at which the protests accelerated, and the level of violence precluded the highly trained and experienced LAPD bike unit from successfully completing its mission.

Finding 1.6: The National Guard was mobilized, responded to the City, and were used to protect

critical infrastructure and major intersections and thoroughfares.

Finding 1.7: While LAPD has clear policies around use of force, crowd management, and other relevant pieces of responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests, they do not have one policy directing response specifically to large-scale, fluid, city-wide civil unrest that turns violent or contains violence.

Leadership and Incident Command

Finding 2.1: The nature of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred in Los Angeles between May 27 and June 7, 2020 were ones that neither LAPD, nor other jurisdictions across the nation, have previously experienced nor expected.

Finding 2.2: The City of Los Angeles lacked a well-coordinated city-wide political, policy, communications, and law enforcement response mission to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred between May 27 and June 7, 2020.

Finding 2.3: Communication within LAPD—particularly in the first few days—was inconsistent between the Chief, his command staff, bureau commanders and field supervisors, and line officers. This created significant challenges regarding: (a) identifying a cogent operating philosophy; (b) determining operations during individual shifts, including when shifts started and ended; and, (c) establishing coordination and consistency between shifts.

Finding 2.4: The issuing and cancellation of Tactical Alerts contributed to confusion and frustration amongst supervisors and officers.

Finding 2.5: LAPD did not effectively leverage intelligence and information city-wide—including publicly-available social media—that may have enhanced situational awareness of officers and their ability to rapidly assess multiple venues and deploy resources.

Finding 2.6: LAPD should develop, implement, and review MOUs with the LASD and other law enforcement agencies to support and clearly define roles, responsibilities, and protocols to First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Public Communication and Social Media

Finding 3.1: Although a virtual JIC was established, the review process impacted the ability of LAPD to post timely messages to its social media accounts.

Finding 3.2: The LAPD decision to not fully leverage social media to share information and respond to false accusations allowed demonstrators to control the narrative and overwhelm LAPD on the information front.

Officer Wellness and Morale

Finding 4.1: For more than 50 years, LAPD has endeavored to assist its personnel through Behavioral Science Services and aligned groups. In many ways, LAPD should be recognized for its innovative programs and leadership in the law enforcement profession regarding physical and mental wellness.

Finding 4.2: The research is clear that law enforcement personnel are exposed to significant traumatic events during the course of their careers. This exposure increases the likelihood of negative physical and mental health impacts that extend beyond an officer's law enforcement career.

Finding 4.3: LAPD, elected officials and the LA community should recognize that research indicates that crowd management and other critical incidents have a significant negative impact on law enforcement personnel, their significant others, and children.

Finding 4.4: COVID-19, the deaths of nine members of the Department, deaths and serious illness among loved ones, and the fear of infecting family members placed untold stress on the LAPD, and exacerbated the stress and trauma associated with crowd management during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 4.5: Officer morale has been described almost universally as 'at an all-time low'. In addition to being the "target" of the protests, frustration with LAPD leadership and inconsistent messaging, and statements and decisions made by elected officials during and after the protests have been perceived as a lack of support for the department.

Community Engagement and Perspective

Finding 5.1: LAPD has a history of professional policing, positive engagement, and strong relationships with business owners and Business Improvement District (BID) organizations, faith- and community-based institutions and organizations, and the Los Angeles community, including activists. They were able to leverage those relationships during responses to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 5.2: Despite ongoing efforts to improve relationships, the history of LAPD is also punctuated with tensions between the community and the department (as well as

After Action Review Purpose and Scope

Purpose, Scope, and Approach

In August 2020, at the request of the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners (LABOPC)—and with funding provided by the Los Angeles Police Foundation—the National Police Foundation (NPF) was engaged to conduct an independent after-action review (AAR), assessment, and analysis of the actions of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) in response to First Amendment assemblies and protests in the City of Los Angeles (LA) from May 27 through June 7, 2020.

The purpose of this NPF AAR is to assist the LABOPC and the LAPD to improve the Department’s preparation and response to future similar events. Putting resources toward this type of review while only occasionally undertaken by Cities or city stakeholders demonstrates the willingness of the LABOPC and the LAPD to consider reimagining policing in the City of Los Angeles, to addressing challenges in community-police interactions, and to protecting First Amendment assemblies and protests. In requesting this review, the LABOPC and the LAPD recognize that to advance and improve policing in the City of Los Angeles, they must engage in rigorous internal and external processes to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in their response to First Amendment assemblies and protests. The LA community also deserves City and LAPD leadership who will commit to follow through on necessary changes to improve future responses to First Amendment assemblies and protests, as well as the delivery of police services in LA.

It should be noted that this AAR is not part of or associated with any other investigation—criminal, civil, internal, or other. The sole purpose of this review is to provide an independent assessment of the LAPD response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests to promote LAPD’s study and improvement of the systems, processes, and strategies executed by their members.

In order to conduct this AAR, the NPF assessment team—comprised of subject matter experts in law enforcement, police-community relations, response to First Amendment assemblies and protests, policy analysis, police data analysis, and research—developed and implemented a process that involved multiple methods of information gathering, collection, and analysis. The NPF assessment team gathered feedback, information, and data through:

- 1. interviews, focus groups, and anonymous feedback;**
- 2. LAPD and City of LA resources and data;**
- 3. open-source news and social media review; and,**
- 4. national academic and public safety resources.¹⁰**

The NPF assessment team used the totality of the information gathered to identify the findings and recommendations included herein.

Access to Data, Information and Perspectives

LAPD provided access to materials and data requested by the NPF assessment team for this review. LAPD provided directives, operational manuals, internal memoranda and special orders, and notices; academy and in-service training curricula/expanded course outlines and lesson plans, guides, training records, and

¹⁰For more information, see Appendix B: Detailed Methodology.

training bulletins; Incident Action Plans, Event Action Plans, and chronology logs; Incident Command System forms; communications logs; arrest, crime, calls for service, booking, property damage, and socio-economic data; officer wellness plans and injury data; and, more as requested by the NPF assessment team. Additionally, LAPD provided the NPF assessment team with approximately two terabytes of videos, images, and radio channel recordings. LAPD also provided access to 147,921 body-worn camera videos and images.

The NPF assessment team also received data, information, and multimedia directly from business representatives and community members.

Challenges and Limitations of this Review

COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NPF assessment team was unable to conduct in-person site visits in LA—historically, an important part of the NPF AAR process. The NPF assessment team normally conducts several site visits throughout the review period in an effort to host in-person interviews and focus groups; to gain situational awareness and perspective of the local community; to understand distances/proximities; to get a better feel for department and city culture; and, to better envision potential challenges related to crowd control and responding officers establishing on-scene command.

The site visits are integral to NPF’s approach to conducting AARs, especially in engaging with community members. The NPF assessment team conducted virtual interviews, focus groups, and community listening sessions, but was unable to visit local coffee shops, eateries, and community gathering locations to conduct spontaneous field interviews and establish the comradery and environmental awareness necessary for the team to be able to ask important questions, hear honest answers, and have tough conversations. The NPF assessment team was able to hold four, 60-minute virtual open listening sessions for community members: two on February 4, 2021 and two on February 17, 2021. A total of 128 community members attended these sessions. In an effort to expand the options for those who wanted to provide input, the team created a webpage—www.policefoundation.org/lapdreview—with an anonymous comment box and an email address to schedule individual interviews or focus groups, provided a phone number for LAPD personnel and LA community members to provide feedback, and disseminated information about the listening sessions and ways to provide feedback through the LABOPC and on the NPF social media accounts.¹¹

COVID-19, which has also been implicated as one of the reasons for the number, and visceral nature, of the protests in the first place, also prevented the NPF assessment team from traveling to LA during the review. It prevented the team from being on-site and generally presented a hurdle to the expansive collection of information through both scheduled formal methodologies and organic approaches that are inherent in the NPF AAR data collection and analysis process.

Coinciding Investigations, Reviews, Inquiries & Assessments, and Limited Participation

Due to simultaneous ongoing litigation, internal affairs investigations, and other AARs regarding the same assemblies and protests, some information was not provided to the NPF assessment team. The NPF

¹¹For more information, see Appendix B: Detailed Methodology.

litigation or internal affairs investigations, in an effort to protect the legitimacy and integrity of those investigations. At the same time as this AAR was underway at least two other similar reviews were also underway. First, a team of former LAPD members led by Gerald Chaleff was commissioned by the City Council to review LAPD's response to SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests¹². Also, through interviews and focus groups, the NPF assessment team was told that the LAPD OCPP was also conducting an internal AAR. The NPF assessment team was not provided access to either AAR¹³ before its final draft was written.

Despite efforts to work with LAPD and the Los Angeles Police Protective League (LAPPL)—the union that represents LAPD officers below the rank of lieutenant—to encourage participation in this review, many LAPD personnel who responded to SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests did not speak with the NPF assessment team. The NPF assessment team scheduled four 90-minute virtual focus groups/listening sessions for LAPD officers; four 90-minute virtual listening sessions for LAPD sergeants; and, one with the Los Angeles Police Protective League Board (LAPPL) to provide opportunities for them to provide input on their experiences during the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. The NPF assessment team also provided several means through which LAPD members could reach out to schedule interviews or focus groups or to provide written input anonymously. Four LAPPL Board members, four sergeants and one officer participated. In addition, a number of high-ranking LAPD personnel who played important roles in the agency's response have since retired, and were not interviewed by the NPF assessment team because the LAPD determined that it was not able to provide contact information for these individuals. The NPF assessment team also conducted a series of focus groups and individual interviews with family members of LAPD personnel.

City of Los Angeles elected officials, while having engaged their own review of the LAPD response to the protests and demonstrations, were invited to participate in this review as well. However, less than half of those invited, participated in interviews with the NPF assessment team.

The NPF assessment team engaged, to the best of their ability, Los Angeles business owners and representatives, community and faith leaders, and individual community members by providing opportunities for them to participate in interviews and voice their concerns. The NPF assessment team scheduled virtual interviews, focus groups, and open listening sessions with LA community members throughout the process. The input and feedback of those who participated is referenced in this report.

While those LAPD personnel, elected officials, and community members who did participate provided a variety of insights and perspectives into areas for the NPF assessment team to focus on, made recommendations, and offered suggestions to enhance police-community relations and the response to First Amendment assemblies and protests, the NPF assessment team was surprised at the unusually low number of individuals willing to participate.

¹² Chaleff, Gerald. (2021, March 10). An Independent Examination Of The Los Angeles Police Department 2020 Protest Response. https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2020/20-0729_rpt_CLA_03-11-21.pdf

¹³ Los Angeles Police Department. (2021). SAFE LA After Action Report DRAFT. Provided to the NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on March 17, 2021.

However, a number of factors may have contributed to this.

- 1. A general lack of trust exists around policing in LA. Many community members don't trust the police and there are politics both within the City of LA and within LAPD that preclude some in the City and LAPD from participating.**
- 2. Due to COVID-19, the NPF assessment team was not able to be on-site in LA and at LAPD to conduct informal interviews and discussions, to better publicize scheduled ones or to encourage individuals to participate. The team had limited reach working remotely.**
- 3. Having three different reviews of the same incident(s) going on at the same time can cause fatigue from community members, LAPD members, and other stakeholders in answering similar questions repeatedly. This 'multiple review' approach can also detract from one focused and thorough investigation that provides access to all the information and a robust variety of perspectives while also contributing to the 'us against them' politics that continues to plague public safety.**

Multiple Stakeholders

While the scope of this assessment was limited to LAPD's response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, multiple stakeholder groups have a role to play in understanding the responses and improvement going forward.

Under the City Charter, the LABOPC serves as the head of the LAPD, setting overall policy or policy direction and goals, while the Chief of Police manages and implements the LABOPC's directives. In 1992, the LABOPC commissioned *The City in Crisis: A Report by the Special Advisor to the Board of Police Commissioners on the Civil Disorder in Los Angeles*, in response to the LAPD handling of the riots instigated by the "not guilty" verdict in the trial involving four LAPD officers for their involvement in the arrest and beating of Rodney King.¹⁴

Chief Moore, his command staff, and the LAPD Office of Constitutional Policing and Policy (OCP) were in the midst of an ongoing process of reviewing LAPD policies, procedures, and training relative to the ways in which the department engages in crowd control and crowd management during First Amendment assemblies, mass demonstrations, protests, and civil unrest when the AAR request was made¹⁵. Chief Moore, his command staff, and the leadership of the OCP are interested in receiving recommendations that would assist them in those ongoing efforts to enhance the programs and operations of the department, as well as police-community relations.

Elected officials also play a key role in the response to First Amendment assemblies and protests. Regardless of their involvement in tactical and operational decisions, their leadership, coordination, and public messaging, have both explicit and implicit impacts on the overall response. It is increasingly important that the mayor, city councilmembers, and other city officials understand their roles and responsibilities and the impacts their actions and statements have.

¹⁴ See footnote 5.

¹⁵ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, August 30). Memorandum of Agreement Between the Los Angeles Police Department and the Police Foundation.

Communities across the country, including LA, are working to address complex issues of race in the United States, including disparities in the criminal justice system, reimagining policing, reducing use of force, and other long-standing and unaddressed socio-economic and political challenges that have impacts on policing and police-community relations. Community organizations and members with a variety of perspectives can play an integral role in helping to identify opportunities to make meaningful enhancements and in working with police and elected officials to create holistic strategies regarding First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Likewise, each of these stakeholders—LABOPC, LAPD, elected officials, and the community—has a role in identifying steps necessary to engage in dialogue, healing, and moving LA forward. City government, LABOPC, LAPD, and the community must commit to rebuilding and restoring trust together through honesty, transparency, accountability, engagement, and a shared definition of public safety. It is also critical that the City of LA, LAPD, and community members join in developing and training for a city-wide response that supports the expression of individual First Amendment rights and prevents disorder from persisting and intensifying.

LA and the LAPD have served as innovative city and police agency models in many ways. LA, LAPD, and Angelenos now have a unique opportunity develop a new model for law enforcement agencies and communities nationwide to resolve the crisis of trust and enhance police and community response to First Amendment assemblies and protests.



National and Local Context

National Context

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old African American man, died after being handcuffed and pinned to the ground by Derek Chauvin, a Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) officer who knelt on Mr. Floyd's neck for more than seven minutes.¹⁶ Three other MPD officers were also charged in the incident. The death of Mr. Floyd was recorded on video by witnesses, and subsequently shared extensively on social and news media. His death galvanized nationwide outrage spurring First Amendment assemblies and protests for racial justice across cities in the US, and across the globe. The public reaction to the death of Mr. Floyd was fueled by a history of high-profile cases involving the deaths of African Americans at the hands of police officers—including Oscar Grant in 2010, Michael Brown and Eric Garner in 2014, Keith Lamont Scott in 2016, and Breonna Taylor and Tony McDade in 2020—and against the backdrop of ongoing distrust between the African American community in particular, and minority groups in general, and the police.

The death of Mr. Floyd also intensified demands for police reform across the nation. As thousands took to the streets to protest, they called for renewed attention to long-standing criticisms and concerns regarding police practice—including complaints about racism and disparate use of force against communities of color, the militarization of police forces, and the lack of accountability for abuses of police power. Perhaps the most controversial demand has been the call to “defund the police.” Proponents of defunding the

police attest that police reform must be radical, as conventional methods of reform have been insufficient to bring about needed changes to policing.

At the same time, the percent of positive COVID-19 tests and the number of fatalities were continuing to increase across the nation.¹⁷ Specifically in Los Angeles (LA), Mayor Eric Garcetti had issued a series of local public health emergencies and guidelines that limited or cancelled public and private gatherings, business operations, and established penalties for failure to comply.^{18 19 20} As a result, industries that are particularly important to the Los Angeles economy—including entertainment, travel, shopping, and dining—began unprecedented levels of furloughs and layoffs.²¹ People were feeling restricted, angry, fearful, anxious, and frustrated, which created the impetus and opportunity for many people to express those feelings through First Amendment assemblies and protests that went on for days and nights.

Anger regarding the death of Mr. Floyd, ongoing calls for police reform, erosion of police legitimacy, and the uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic fueled the flames of an already-divisive political environment. Increasingly, traditional and social media was used to make and spread accusations, question opposing views, and pit groups against one another. Across the nation, communities were challenged to reconsider issues that burned below the surface as First Amendment assemblies became protests and riots.

¹⁶ State of Minnesota v. Derek Michael Chauvin. (2020, June 3). US District Court, Fourth Judicial District.

<https://mncourts.gov/mncourtsgov/media/High-Profile-Cases/27-CR-20-12646/AmendedComplaint06032020.pdf>

¹⁷ US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, June). COVIDView Week 22, ending May 30, 2020.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/pdf/covidview-06-05-2020.pdf>

¹⁸ Eric Garcetti. (2020, March 4). Declaration of Local Emergency. City of Los Angeles.

http://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2020/20-0291_reso_03-04-2020.pdf

¹⁹ Eric Garcetti. (2020, March 12). COVID-19 City Guidelines. City of Los Angeles.

<https://www.lamayor.org/sites/g/files/wph446/f/article/files/Mayor%20Memo%20COVID-19%20LA%20City%20Guidelines.pdf>

²⁰ Eric Garcetti. (2020, March 19). Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority. City of Los Angeles. [https://www.lamayor.org/sites/g/files/wph446/f/page/file/20200527%20Mayor%20Public%20Order%20SAFER%20AT%20HOME%20ORDER%202020.03.19%20\(REV%202020.05.27\).pdf](https://www.lamayor.org/sites/g/files/wph446/f/page/file/20200527%20Mayor%20Public%20Order%20SAFER%20AT%20HOME%20ORDER%202020.03.19%20(REV%202020.05.27).pdf)

²¹ Borden, Taylor, A. Akhtar, J. Hadden, & D. Bose. (2020, October 8). “The coronavirus outbreak has triggered unprecedented mass layoffs and furloughs. Here are the major companies that have announced they are downsizing their workforces.” Business Insider.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/coronavirus-layoffs-furloughs-hospitality-service-travel-unemployment-2020#on-october-1-united-airlines-furloughed-13000-people-the-company-had-previously-said-16370-jobs-would-be-impacted-by-cuts-7>

The “New” Protest Environment

As First Amendment assemblies and protests have evolved, so has the police response to them. Historically, protests were met by escalated force that focused on crowd control. Clear examples of the escalated force style come from the response to civil rights protests in the 1960s.²² During the 1980s, however, a shift toward a negotiated management approach was adopted. This approach prioritized the First Amendment right of the community to peaceably assemble and encouraged the police to work with protesters before demonstrations to limit conflict.²³

Protesters began to adjust tactics again in the late 1990s, by overwhelming law enforcement with large numbers and spontaneous and violent demonstrations, exemplified by the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) protests in Seattle.²⁴ The Seattle Police Department (SPD) did not anticipate the size of the demonstration or the level of violence perpetrated by agitators. Therefore, the SPD responded by reverting back to escalated force tactics. Following the SPD response to the WTO, some police departments sought to adopt protest and crowd management approaches that were flexible and would account for the changing nature of protests. Some police officials felt that pure negotiation management was too “soft,” but wanted options that were less coercive than previous escalated force tactics.²⁵ This led to the approach that is most-often employed today—which is the identification and strategic extraction of individuals inciting or engaging in acts of violence²⁶

and increasing proactivity toward negotiation objectives.²⁷

More recently, protesters have again altered tactics with another key factor: the extensive use of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram. Protesters increasingly leverage social media to gain support for their movement, to share logistics information, distribute mobilization plans, and track police movements. The use of social media has added a significant challenge to crowd management strategies utilized by police, as crowds have become more organized, more versatile, more nimble and fluid, and more strategic—with movements²⁸ planned around countering police tactics, instead of the other way around.²⁹

Another recent tactical evolution by protesters has been to disregard applying for and receiving permits. Many jurisdictions require organizers to complete a permit application for marches or parades that require blocking traffic or street closures, large rallies requiring the use of sound amplifying devices, or events with a planned attendance above a certain number.³⁰ While the intent of the permit process is to provide police and public officials sufficient notice to plan and prepare accordingly, recent protest groups have chosen to leverage the element of surprise. When the Occupy movement spread across the nation in 2011, local groups organized entirely on social media and staged demonstrations, protests,

²² McPhail, Clark, David Schweingruber, and John McCarthy. (1998). “Policing protest in the United States: 1960-1995.” *Policing protest: The control of mass demonstrations in western democracies* 6: 49-69.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Bryant, Kenneth. “Policing communities of color: An historical examination of social control and protest management strategies.” In *Political Authority, Social Control and Public Policy*. Emerald Publishing Limited, 2019.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Noakes, John, and Patrick F. Gillham. “Aspects of the ‘New Penology’ in the police response to major political protests in the United States, 1999–2000.” *The policing of transnational protest* (2006): 97-116.

²⁷ Wahlström, Mattias. (2011). *The making of protest and protest policing: Negotiation, knowledge, space, and narrative*. Department of Sociology; Sociologiska institutionen.

²⁸ Earl, Jennifer, Heather McKee Hurwitz, Analicia Mejia Mesinas, Margaret Tolan, and Ashley Arlotti. (2013). “This protest will be tweeted: Twitter and protest policing during the Pittsburgh G20.” *Information, communication & society* 16, no. 4. 459-478.

²⁹ Jost, John T., Pablo Barbera, Richard Bonneau, Melanie Langer, Megan Metzger, Jonathan Nagler, Joanna Sterling, and Joshua A. Tucker. (2018, February 13). “How Social Media Facilitates Political Protest: Information, Motivation, and Social Networks.” *Political Psychology* 39, no. S1. 85-118. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/pops.12478>

³⁰ American Civil Liberties Union. (2021). *Know Your Rights: Protesters’ Rights*. <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/protesters-rights/>

and occupations of government buildings with no prior warning.³¹ Similarly, protests in Portland, Oregon, in 2017 and 2018 were impacted by the long-standing practice by the city of overlooking the need for permits to protest. The community described the permitting process—run by Parks and Recreation Department—as complicated and cumbersome, but understood that it provided Portland Police Bureau with valuable preparation information if used.³²

It must be noted that while shifts in protest strategies have occurred, there is considerable heterogeneity in the manner by which police agencies respond.³³ The trend toward the militarization of the police response to protests has implications for how the police balance the use of escalated force and negotiation management.³⁴ Police generally perceive and respond to First Amendment assemblies and protests from the vantage points of regulation, management, and control as a means to avoid violence and maintain public order. From the police perspective, their primary role and responsibility is to ensure safety and security of persons and property. Particularly in terms of protecting persons—protesters, media, bystanders, and officers—police also have to be prepared for scenarios in which counter-demonstrators or others intent on causing harm use the large crowd to blend in before perpetrating their attacks.³⁵ As is exemplified by violent—

and in some cases fatal—incidents between demonstrators and counter-demonstrators in Charlottesville, Virginia; Kalamazoo, Michigan; and, Washington, DC, police departments must be prepared for the worst, and in doing so, use strategies and tactics that support public safety by quickly responding to acts of violence.

Without community dialogue and explanation regarding the strategies, tactics, and equipment used by law enforcement to respond to violence and to disperse crowds, police actions are often interpreted as unnecessary, overly-aggressive, and demonstrating a predisposition to the “warrior” mentality.³⁶ In chaotic situations, the police can perceive the entire group as a single entity, rather than as individual persons.³⁷ In instances when individuals in a large group attempt to instigate police officers into using force against them, the response more often than not, is directed at the entire group who are seen as aiding and abetting the violent individuals. Without adequate time to plan, prepare, and deploy the most well-trained personnel and appropriate resources to facilitate spontaneous events, officers tend to rely on the tactics they are most-regularly trained in to quickly regain and maintain control.³⁸

³¹ Maguire, Edward R. and Megan Oakley. (2020, January). Policing Protests: Lessons from the Occupy Movement, Ferguson & Beyond: A Guide for Police. Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b293370ec4eb7e463c960e6/t/601d60d2a7f98e73c3dbec05/1612538076086/Policing+Protests.pdf>

³² National Police Foundation. (2020). Preparing for and Responding to Mass Demonstrations and Counter- Demonstrations in Portland, Oregon: A Review of the Portland Police Bureau’s Response to Demonstrations on June 4, 2017, August 4, 2018, and August 17, 2019. Arlington, VA: National Police Foundation. <https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/portland-police-independent-review-final-report.pdf>

³³ See footnote 31.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

Local Context

Rodney King – 1992

On April 29, 1992 the City of Los Angeles began to experience one of its most disruptive civil unrest episodes in history. On that day, four Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officers were acquitted for the beating of Rodney King, an African American man who was brutally beaten by officers after leading them on a high-speed chase a year before. Once the non-guilty verdicts of the involved police officers were made public, residents of South LA erupted in protests that turned into five days of violent riots, massive looting, destruction of property, and arson, that culminated with 6,000 arrests and the death of more than 60 individuals.³⁹

In 1992, an AAR assessed the City's and the LAPD's response to the unrest and highlighted the overall lack of preparedness of both parties. Given the insufficient communication between government and police leaders and inadequate training for such situations,

the disorganization that ensued in response to the unrest was determined to be unsurprising. The LAPD also suffered from a lack of leadership, with the Chief of Police at that time being unable to provide officers with meaningful direction and failure to mobilize and deploy resources quickly.⁴⁰ The LAPD acted on the findings and recommendations found in the AAR and implemented changes to its culture, training, provisions, and community relationships.

Adding to the urgency for change was the 1991 Christopher Commission report on the department's use of force practices.⁴¹ The Commission found that there was a significant number of officers who persistently ignored departmental guidelines on use of force, frequently employing excessive force against the community. The report also highlighted pervasive improper attitudes and practices of misconduct and overt racism among some officers.⁴²

May Day – 2007

Another significant clash between LA protesters and the LAPD occurred on May 1, 2007, when approximately 6,000-7,000 protesters marched to MacArthur Park in support of immigration rights. The protests were peaceful for most of the day, however, as a group of between 200-300 protesters took a side route on their way to the park, a team of LAPD motorcycle officers attempted to re-direct the crowd. At this point, tension started to escalate as a sergeant was grabbed by three individuals who attempted to pull him off his motorcycle.⁴³ Later, a group of approximately 30 individuals began to throw projectiles at the police, including wooden sticks, ice, gravel, and pieces of cement. In response, officers

formed a skirmish line and, without a dispersal order, began moving the crowd. As they moved the crowd, officers struck some protesters with batons and struck some media crew members as well. The department deployed a total of 146 less-lethal munitions and struck persons with batons more than 100 times. As a result, 246 individuals claimed injury, and 18 officers were treated for various abrasions and contusions. The LAPD also faced multiple lawsuits for excessive use of force which they settled with nearly \$13 million in 2009.⁴⁴

The LAPD, under the command of Chief William "Bill" Bratton, later published an assessment of the

³⁹ See footnote 5.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Christopher, Warren, ed. (1991). Report of the independent commission on the Los Angeles Police Department. Diane Publishing.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Los Angeles Police Department. (2007) "An Examination of May Day 2007: Report to the Board of Commissioners." <https://www.policefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/An-Examination-of-May-Day-2007-Los-Angeles-Police-Department-Report-to-the-Board-of-Police-Commissioners.pdf>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

department's response to the protests.⁴⁵ In their report, LAPD described several problems related to planning, tactics, command and control, situational awareness, training, and individual responsibility. However, as the report noted, the larger issue was the lack of intervention from command staff members. The report noted "the failing leadership, breakdown in supervision, and breakdown in personal discipline, caused those without full situational awareness to take action without

understanding how their decisions might affect the final outcome."⁴⁶

Following the report's release, the LAPD put forth a plan of improvement, including annual revisions of their crowd management and control and use of less-lethal force policies. They instituted regular Mobile Field Force trainings and engaged in the re-assessment of protocols for planned and unplanned events.⁴⁷

Crowd Management Reforms and Community Policing in LAPD

When Chief Bratton took over as Chief of Police in 2002, the LAPD was facing the challenge of reforming its practices and culture. The year prior, the department entered a consent decree to settle a lawsuit brought by the US Department of Justice due to a pattern of police misconduct. According to a report published by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Chief Bratton was instrumental in the implementation of the consent decree measures.⁴⁸ Chief Bratton was widely praised for his ability to introduce community-policing to the LAPD's philosophy, and strengthening the ties between the department and LA residents. One way he achieved this was by showing transparency—for example, after the 2007 May Day incident, Bratton publicly denounced the LAPD's behavior, demoting one commander and forcing another into retirement. He later commissioned the report that outlined the failures of the department's response.⁴⁹ Bratton believed that community policing had to be developed by field captains to fit their specific divisions and neighborhoods' needs.

When Bratton retired in 2009, Charlie Beck was appointed the new Chief of Police. Chief Beck had worked alongside Chief Bratton for years, sharing Bratton's views on the importance of community

policing. In a post he wrote reflecting on his first year as Chief, Beck wrote: "I believe one of the keys to a successful police organization is making myself easily accessible to the public in a way that genuinely opens honest communications, particularly with people who have disagreements with the LAPD."⁵⁰ Among Chief Beck's community policing initiatives was the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The CSP's officers were not judged by "arrest numbers but by how effectively they strengthened and stabilized each of the housing projects; kept crime and violence low through gaining the community's trust, partnership, and support; and worked with the projects' kids and families to keep the kids out of jail."⁵¹

Following Chief Beck's retirement in 2018, Michel R. Moore was appointed Chief of Police. Chief Moore had risen through the ranks and assignments of LAPD, serving as an officer, detective, sergeant, lieutenant, commander, deputy chief, and assistant chief, prior to being Chief. During his LAPD tenure, Chief Moore has overseen training, the department's command center, and operations; was Chair of the Use of Force Review Board; and, directed the LAPD CompStat process, among other notable accomplishments. Throughout his career, Chief Moore has promoted community policing, partnership-oriented strategies involving

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Stone, Christopher, Todd S. Foglesong, and Christine M. Cole. (2009). *Policing Los Angeles under a consent decree: The dynamics of change at the LAPD*. Cambridge, MA: Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, Harvard Kennedy School.

⁴⁹ Domanick, Joe. (2015, September) "What Bill Bratton Has Taught American Police" *Time Magazine*.

⁵⁰ Beck, Charlie. "Reflections on My First Year as Chief of Police" Official Site of the Los Angeles Police Department. https://www.lapdonline.org/home/content_basic_view/46571

⁵¹ Domanick, Joe. (2015). *Blue: The LAPD and the Battle to Redeem American Policing*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

community stakeholders and various members of the criminal justice system, and professionalism and diversity.⁵² Nowhere is the commitment to community partnerships more apparent than in the formalization of the Community Safety Bureau.

Some notable efforts to strengthen the fragile relationship between the communities in South LA and LAPD have emerged, particularly in Watts, a neighborhood that has a long history of dealing with gang violence. In 2006, the LAPD developed the Watts Gang Task Force, in an attempt to reduce the rates of violence through a community-based policing philosophy. Since 2011, Watts has also been part of the Community Safety Partnership, a program developed by the LAPD, the Housing Authority and the city's office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development. Through the program, 30 specially assigned officers invest efforts in community relationships and building trust. Officers play basketball with residents, coach

the Watts Bear football team, and generally engage with the community on and off duty.⁵³

The results of such community policing efforts have been compelling. A University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) study found that the CSP program was responsible for approximately 221 fewer violent crimes over a six-year period (2012-2017). These include approximately seven fewer homicides, 93 fewer aggravated assaults and 122 fewer robberies.⁵⁴ Moreover, there is open dialogue between the community and the police, something that seemed impossible a decade ago in Watts.⁵⁵ The program has now expanded to 10 sites across LA. Watts is just one neighborhood of South LA, which does not necessarily represent all the communities of color across the City of LA. Nonetheless, the efforts that the LAPD has invested in Watts is an example of how historically contentious relationships can become amicable and productive.

Community Safety Partnership

In 2020, the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was formalized as the Community Safety Bureau, headed by Deputy Chief Emada Tingirides.

CSP's goal is to reduce the amount of violence and gang influence across LA through developing strong partnerships with the community. The new bureau works on institutionalizing the CSP model across all aspects of the LAPD.

CSP officers dedicate at least five years to a single neighborhood where they invest partner with the community to co-create strategies and programs that address the specific needs of the community. The CPS emphasizes that officer's productivity is no longer defined by stops, citations, and arrests. Rather through the community's engagement and feelings of overall safety and security.

⁵² Los Angeles Police Department. Michel R. Moore. https://www.lapdonline.org/lapd_command_staff/comm_bio_view/7646

⁵³ Siegler, Kirk. (2013, July 25). "After Years of Violence, L.A.'s Watts Sees Crime Subside" NPR.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/07/25/205198028/Once-Crime-Ridden-South-LA-s-Watts-Sees-Violence-Drop>

⁵⁴ Leap, Jorja, Brantingham, Jeffrey, and Bonis Susana. (2020, March). "Evaluation Of The LAPD Community Safety Partnership" Final report. http://lapdpolicem.lacity.org/051220/CSP%20Evaluation%20Report_2020_FINAL.pdf

⁵⁵ Rice, Constance, and Susan K. Lee. (2015). "Relationship-based policing achieving safety in Watts." Washington, DC: Advancement Project.

It is worth noting that the CSP program, now developed into the Community Safety Bureau, has been commended by civil rights advocates and City councilmembers.⁵⁶ However, some community members remain hesitant and skeptical, particularly those proponents of defunding the

police, who believe that investing additional funds into police-driven programs is not the right approach.⁵⁷ As the Community Safety Bureau gains its footing in LA's post George Floyd landscape, it remains to be seen how their efforts progress city-wide community-police relationships.

LAPD Relationships with Communities of Color

The relationship between the LAPD and the communities of color they serve has been tumultuous, particularly in South LA where tension between the African American community and the police has been pervasive throughout the neighborhood's history. Most exemplary is that South LA, previously known as South Central, was the epicenter of the 1965 Watts Uprising and the 1992 Rodney King riots.

In 2019, the University of Southern California (USC) Price Center for Social Innovation released a report detailing findings from public safety data

(including calls for service, stops by police, arrests) and community listening sessions that showed over-policing taking place in communities of color. People in communities of color across all LA County were stopped at higher rates by the police than other groups, and Black community members were stopped and arrested three times as often as their white and Latino counterparts. Moreover, participants in listening sessions voiced the damaging psychological effects of racial profiling, and their disappointment at the lack of investments in community programs, education and health services, particularly in South LA.⁵⁸

Public Perception of LAPD

The LAPD underwent significant changes at the turn of the century when, in 2000, the US Department of Justice announced that it had collected enough evidence to pursue litigation against the City of LA over a pattern of police misconduct. Consequently, the city government entered a consent decree committing to reform under the supervision of the Federal Court.

According to a report produced by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, from 2005 to 2009, the LAPD was successful in garnering substantially greater ratings of approval, which were consistent across ethnic and racial groups. LA community members reported on their personal experiences with LAPD officers as well. The general pattern of responses was positive, with majorities of every racial and ethnic group reporting that most of the

LAPD officers they encountered treated them, as well as their friends and family, with respect. However, it must be noted that among Black and African American respondents, 10% reported that almost no LAPD officers treat them with respect, and the figure was even higher for the small number of residents who identify as something other than Hispanic, White, Black, or Asian. As the authors of the report stated, this 10% figure might not cause too much concern, but it is twice the rate for Hispanics and it fits a general pattern, suggesting that in a portion of African American communities, relations with the LAPD remained tense.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Denkmann, Libby. (2020, July 28). "The LAPD Is Doubling Down on A Community Policing Program. Why Some Activists Are Opposed" LAist. <https://laist.com/2020/07/28/lapd-communication-safety-partnership-expands-reaction.php>

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ USC Price. "NDSC Criminal Justice Data Initiative Year 1 Wrap Report." https://socialinnovation.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Price-Criminal-Justice_Final_October-6-1.pdf

⁵⁹ Stone, Christopher, Todd S. Foglesong, and Christine M. Cole. (2009). Policing Los Angeles under a consent decree: The dynamics of change at the LAPD. Cambridge, MA: Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, Harvard Kennedy School.

report on bias police training, which also included results from a community survey.⁶⁰ They found that across the city, nearly three-quarters of residents strongly or somewhat approved of the job the LAPD was doing. The confidence ratings were considerably lower among the African American and Black community, of which just 48% reported viewing LAPD officers as honest and trustworthy. This is compared to 74% of white residents, 71% of Latinos and 68% of Asians. Moreover, community members of various backgrounds expressed concern about whether the LAPD treats people equally. Only about half of all respondents agreed that officers treat people of all races and ethnicities fairly.⁶¹

In the wake of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, StudyLA and Loyola Marymount University conducted a survey of attitudes and opinions of city residents towards the LAPD. According to the survey results, approximately 88.2% of residents support community policing; more than 60% of residents believe LAPD is “serving and protecting my neighborhood” and “serving and protecting people like me;” and, more than 50% of residents believe they can trust LAPD to do what is right. The survey results also demonstrated that approximately 47.5% of residents believed LAPD use too much force in their treatment of protesters, while 40.5% believed it was an appropriate amount.⁶²



⁶⁰ Los Angeles Police Department. (2016, November 15). Report of the Los Angeles Police Department on the Prevention and Elimination of Biased Policing. http://www.lapdpolicy.com.lacity.org/111516/BPC_16-0391.pdf

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Guerra, Fernando J. and Brianne Gilbert. (2020) Police and Community Relations Survey. Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles.

General Summary of Events

The SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests following the death of George Floyd began in Los Angeles on May 27, 2020 and continued for almost two weeks. Through interviews, focus groups, and listening sessions, the NPF assessment team identified three distinct phases of the time period from May 27 through June 7, 2020:

- **Wednesday, May 27 through Friday, May 29—which were primarily characterized by various small groups of protesters outmaneuvering LAPD members and causing destruction mostly downtown;**
- **Saturday, May 30 through Monday, June 1—which involved large-scale gatherings that devolved into destruction and violence, increased tensions, and clashes between LAPD and protesters; and,**
- **Tuesday, June 2 through Sunday, June 7—which centered on peacefully engaging in First Amendment assemblies and LAPD and the community coming together.**⁶³

From May 27 through June 7, 2020, LAPD arrested thousands of people (see Table 1 below) and impounded hundreds of vehicles. Documented damage was recorded for 142 police vehicles—at a total cost of approximately \$836,589.00 for labor and parts—and additional damage to LAPD facilities brought the total cost to approximately one million dollars.⁶⁴ Additionally, more than 100 businesses were vandalized and looted, city buses and property were sprayed with graffiti and lit on fire, and other destruction totaled millions of dollars, leading at least one business representative who attended an NPF assessment team community listening session to question whether downtown LA would ever truly recover.⁶⁵

Table 1: SAFE LA First Amendment Assemblies and Protests Arrests and Total Arrests

Date	SAFE LA Arrests ⁶⁶	Total Arrests in LA ⁶⁷
May 27, 2020	No available data	193
May 28, 2020	3	194
May 29, 2020	264	493
May 30, 2020	855	1,002
May 31, 2020	719	932
June 1, 2020	1,378	1,743
June 2, 2020	969	1,130
June 3, 2020	55	175
June 4, 2020	20	124
June 5, 2020	3	94
June 6, 2020	8	107
June 7, 2020	1	107

⁶³ See Appendix C: Timeline of Events for a timeline of daily occurrences.

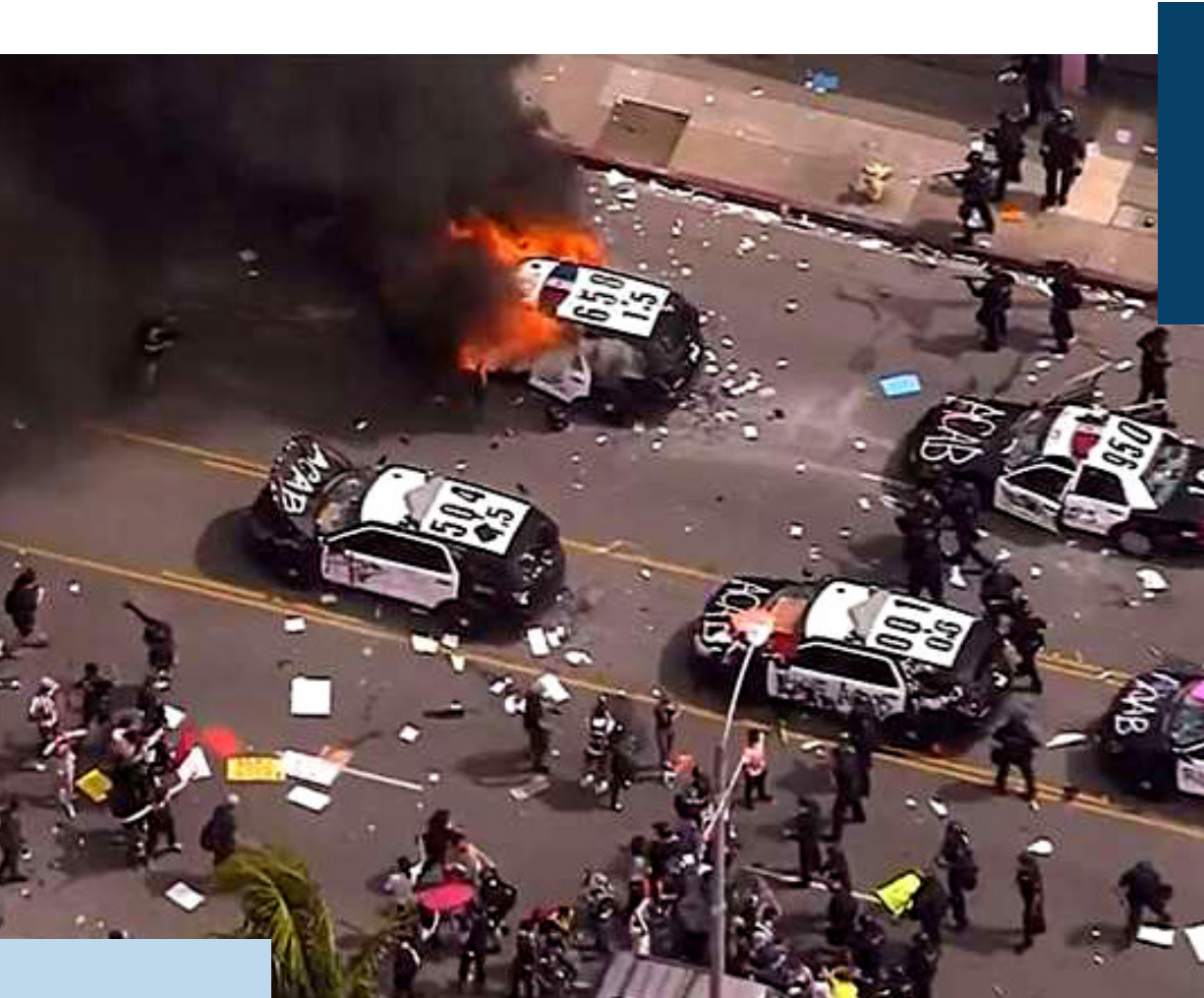
⁶⁴ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, August 11). Project 20-064, After-Action Expenditures. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on March 19, 2021.

⁶⁵ NPF assessment team Community Listening session. February 4, 2021.

⁶⁶ Los Angeles Police Department. (2021). SAFE LA After Action Report DRAFT. Provided to the NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on March 17, 2021.

⁶⁷ Total Arrests equals the number of SAFE LA Arrests plus the number of arrests according to the City of Los Angeles Open Data website. City of Los Angeles. (2021). Los Angeles Open Data. <https://data.lacity.org/>

Following the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, at least seven LAPD officers were reassigned to “non-field duties” and more than 50 complaints alleging misconduct, violations of LAPD policies, and excessive force were filed.⁶⁸ The National Lawyers Guild—on behalf of Black Lives Matter of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Community Action Network Civil—also filed a class action lawsuit against the City, LAPD, and Chief Moore alleging excessive use of force and violations of First, Fourth, and 14th Amendment rights. Individual protesters have also filed their own civil suits against LAPD.⁶⁹



⁶⁸ Wamsley, Laurel. (2020, June 11). “LA Police Reassigns 7 Officers As It Investigates Complaints Of Excessive Force.” KPBS. <https://www.kpbs.org/news/2020/jun/11/los-angeles-pd-reassigns-7-officers-as-it/>

⁶⁹ National Lawyers Guild. (2020, June 21). First Amended Complaint: Class Action; Injunctive Relief and Damages. US District Court Central District of California–Western Division. <https://nlg-la.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/06/AMENDED-COMPLAINT-ECF.pdf>

Chapter One: LAPD Provisions and Training Relevant to First Amendment Assemblies and Protests

The US Constitution, the California Constitution, and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) all provide for the rights of free speech and assembly. While providing the right to free speech (Article I, Section 2) and the right to assemble (Article I, Section 3), the California Penal Code and the LAPD also acknowledge that there are instances in which certain assemblies are not protected by the First Amendment.

According to California Penal Code Section 407, “Whenever two or more persons assemble together to do an unlawful act, or to do a lawful act in a violent, boisterous or tumultuous manner, such assembly is an unlawful assembly.”⁷⁰ Likewise, according to LAPD, “When a preplanned or spontaneous lawful assembly deteriorates to the point where there is a potential for unlawful activity or threat of violence, the Department has a duty to stop this behavior.”⁷¹ Law enforcement is provided the authority to take necessary actions to mitigate unlawful activity, as long as the actions follow department provisions, procedures, and training.

Use of Force

In multiple locations throughout its Manual, LAPD addresses use of force. In providing for officers to use force, LAPD Provision 1/115 Management Principles, reminds that “The police should use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order...and police should use only the reasonable amount of physical force which is necessary on any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.”⁷² The Preamble to Use of Force also establishes that the guiding principle in using force is “reverence for human life,” and acknowledges that “the use of force by members of law enforcement is a matter of critical concern both to the public and the law enforcement community.”⁷³ Additionally, according to Provision 1/556.10 Policy on the Use of Force, “It is the policy of this Department that, whenever practicable, officers shall use techniques and tools consistent with department de-escalation training to reduce the intensity of any encounter with a suspect and enable an officer to have additional options to mitigate the need to use a higher level of force while maintaining control of the situation.”⁷⁴ The Provision continues to identify factors used to determine “objective reasonableness,” which include, “the feasibility of using de-escalation tactics,” “the potential for injury to citizens, officers or subjects,” and, “the environmental factors and/or other exigent circumstances” amongst other things.⁷⁵

Provision 4/245.05 differentiates the uses of force between Categorical Use of Force (CUOF) and Non-Categorical Use of Force (NCUOF) and explains the reporting requirements of each. An NCUOF is defined as, “an incident in which any on-duty or off-duty Department employee whose occupation as a Department employee is a factor, uses physical force or a control device to: compel a person to comply with the employee’s direction; defend themselves; defend others; effect an arrest or detention; prevent escape; or, overcome resistance.” Under traditional circumstances, the only NCUOF incidents that are not required to be reported are those already

70 State of California. (1969). State of California Penal Code, Section 407. [https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PEN§ionNum=407#:~:text=Whenever%20two%20or%20more%20persons,\(Amended%20by%20Stats](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PEN§ionNum=407#:~:text=Whenever%20two%20or%20more%20persons,(Amended%20by%20Stats)

71 City of Los Angeles. (2009). Los Angeles Police Department Emergency Operations Guide, Volume 5: Guidelines for Crowd Management and Crowd Control. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

72 Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). 2020 3rd Quarter Manual: Los Angeles Police Department. https://www.lapdonline.org/lapd_manual/

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

being investigated by the LAPD Force Investigation Division (FID); the use of certain grips that do not result in injury or complaints of injury to the subject; and, uses of body weight that do not result in injury or complaints of injury to the subject.⁷⁶

As it relates to crowd control situations, LAPD acknowledges that officers “may have to utilize force to move crowd members who do not respond to verbal directions, control violent individuals, or to effect an arrest.” However, all use of force policies, including prioritizing de-escalation and using only the objectively reasonable level of force and only as a last resort if verbalization is unsuccessful in gaining compliance, pertain regardless of the situation.⁷⁷

Regardless of the situation, LAPD recommends that when feasible, officers provide verbal warning prior to using any level of force to control an individual. The verbal warning should include a command and warning of potential consequences of the use of force if compliance is not achieved.

Less-Lethal Weapons

Batons: All sworn LAPD personnel are issued a baton. When necessary, if verbalization appears to be ineffective or an officer has a reasonable belief that a particular situation may escalate to a physical confrontation, they may draw their baton as a show of force. Officers are also allowed to use their baton when a suspect poses an immediate threat to their safety.⁷⁸ Specifically during crowd control situations, officers are authorized to use their batons to push individuals, “who do not respond to verbal commands and encroach upon officers on a skirmish line or who intentionally delay departure while officers attempt to disperse the crowd, whether or not a lawful dispersal order has been issued.”⁷⁹ Officers may also use their batons as an impact device in a crowd control situation when the crowd, or an individual in the crowd, is threatening or violent in nature.⁸⁰

Under traditional circumstances, the use of a baton is a reportable NCUOF when it is used to strike a suspect, and photographs of all visible and noted injuries are required to be taken by a supervisor.⁸¹

Additionally, the provision or non-provision of a use of force warning must be documented on the NCUOF report. The Use of Force Summary heading must include the name of the officer that gave the warning and, where appropriate, an explanation and appropriate justification for not using the warning.⁸²

As it relates to crowd control, though, LAPD Provision 4/245.05 states that, “a use of force report is not required when officer(s) become involved in an incident where force is used to push, move, or strike individuals who exhibit unlawful or hostile behavior and who do not respond to verbal directions by the police.”⁸³ This Provision applies to officers working in organized squad and platoon sized units directly involved in crowd control situations, but does not cover situations when an officer “becomes involved in an isolated incident with an individual during a crowd control situation, which goes beyond the mission of the skirmish line,” in which case an NCUOF report is required.⁸⁴

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Los Angeles Police Department. (2011, June). Directive No. 11: Use of Force – Tactics Directive, Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

⁷⁸ Los Angeles Police Department. (2018, August). Directive No. 8.2: Use of Force – Tactics Directive Baton. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

⁷⁹ See footnote 77.

⁸⁰ See footnote 78.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ See footnote 72.

⁸⁴ See footnote 78.

OC Spray and Chemical Agents⁸⁵: All sworn LAPD personnel are issued an oleoresin capsaicin (OC) spray canister.⁸⁶ OC spray may only be considered as a use of force option when a suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of an officer or others. Unlike a baton, an OC spray canister may not be drawn merely as a show of force, because its deployment is considered an “Intermediate Force Option.” OC spray may be deployed in crowd control situations to control a specific suspect or when approved by a commander or above on a larger crowd.⁸⁷ Similar to using a baton, when feasible, officers should issue a verbal warning that includes a command and warning of potential consequences of the use of force prior to deploying OC spray. In individual circumstances, the deployment of OC spray is a reportable NCUOF when the spray makes contact with the suspect’s clothing or skin. When it is deployed but does not make such contact, officers are still required to document the circumstances on an Employee Report.⁸⁸ Additionally, the provision or non-provision of a use of force warning must be documented on the NCUOF report. The Use of Force Summary heading must include the name of the officer that gave the warning and, where appropriate, an explanation and appropriate justification for not using the warning.⁸⁹

As it relates to crowd control situations, there is an added note in Provision 4/245.05 that the use of chemical agents must be approved by a commander or above.⁹⁰ It is important to note that projectile chemical agents were not approved

during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, and the NPF assessment team found no official records that chemical munitions or agents were deployed by LAPD personnel.

Non-Chemical Munitions: LAPD Metropolitan Division personnel and other personnel who complete specific trainings may deploy 37mm non-target specific dispersal rounds, and the Super-Sock round from a beanbag shotgun as a target-specific munition. The beanbag shotgun should be deployed at a range of approximately five to 45 feet and must only be used with sock round ammunition. The sock round is a 12-gauge cartridge that contained a shot-filled fabric bag designed to be non-penetrating and distribute energy over a broad surface area upon strike. The round should be primarily aimed at the navel area or belt line, but may also target an individual’s arms, hands, or legs.⁹¹

Additionally, only personnel who have completed specialized training and are 40mm Launcher Certified may check out or deploy the 40mm sponge round and may only do so as a target-specific munition.⁹² The 40mm may only be used in crowd control situations against a single suspect, also known as a target-specific less-lethal option. The 40mm round is a “point-of-aim, point-of-impact, direct fire round...designed to be non-penetrating, and upon striking a target, distribute energy over a broad surface area.” The round should be primarily aimed at the navel area or belt line, but may also target an individual’s

⁸⁵ It is possible that community members who witnessed the deployment of OC spray may be referring to that when discussing “chemical munitions” or “chemical agents” being used by LAPD. It is important to note that projectile chemical agents were not approved during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, and the NPF assessment team found no official records that chemical munitions or agents were deployed by LAPD personnel.

⁸⁶ Los Angeles Police Department. (2018, July). Directive No. 5.2: Use of Force – Tactics Directive Oleoresin Capsicum. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ See footnote 72.

⁹¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2018, July). Directive No. 6.3: Use of Force – Tactics Directive, 40mm Less-Lethal Launcher. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

⁹² Los Angeles Police Department. (2018, October 16). Los Angeles Police Department Integrating Communications, De-Escalation and Crowd Control Expanded Course Outline. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically

arms, hands, or legs.⁹³ Similar to the other less-lethal weapons, when feasible, officers should issue a verbal warning that includes a command and warning of potential consequences of the use of force prior to deploying a projectile launcher. The 40mm should be deployed at a range of approximately five to 110 feet.⁹⁴

Under routine circumstances, the use of a beanbag shotgun for any reason other than an approved training exercise is considered a reportable NCUOF, unless the round does not strike a person, in which case the Employee's Report must be completed to document the incident.⁹⁵ Additionally, the provision or non-provision of

a use of force warning must be documented on the NCUOF report. The Use of Force Summary heading must include the name of the officer that gave the warning and, where appropriate, an explanation and appropriate justification for not using the warning.⁹⁶ However, as it relates to crowd control situations, Provision 4/245.05 notes, "The discharge, including tactical discharge, of a projectile weapon (e.g., beanbag shotgun, 37 mm or 40mm projectile launcher or Compressor Air Projectile System), electronic control devise (Taser), or any chemical dispenser that does not make contact with an individual or their clothing is not a reportable use of force."⁹⁷

Crowd Control Incident Documentation and Review

While Provision 4/245.05 provides leniency regarding individual documentation of NCUOF incidents in response to crowd control situations, it does state that "officers shall notify their immediate supervisor of the use of force once the tactical situation has been resolved." The Provision further requires that the supervisor, "shall report the action on the Incident Command System (ICS), Form 214 (Activity Log), or as directed by the incident commander."⁹⁸ The Provision does not provide requirements regarding the specificity of the information that must be documented in each NCUOF under their supervision.

Likewise, Provision 3/579.15 provides significant leniency regarding the level of information required to accompany use of body-worn cameras (BWCs).⁹⁹ LAPD does not require the geographic location of each BWC to be enabled or for clips or

markers to be used to document specific incidents. Additionally, there is no process to ensure or check that individual videos correspond to applicable names, badge numbers, and locations when they are uploaded to the BWC storage site. While each BWC is assigned a serial number, the NPF assessment team did not find that the LAPD has a way to easily search for all videos associated with a particular BWC serial number, and there is no way to ensure that a particular BWC serial number was associated with a particular officer during a particular time period. LAPD personnel acknowledged the difficulties in identifying all video evidence related to a single incident caused by officers "using incident numbers, Division of Records numbers, and other qualitative descriptors to identify incidents" and established the requirement to, "only use the full 12-digit incident number in the 'ID' field" and the event type to

⁹³ See footnote 91.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ See footnote 72.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Los Angeles Police Department. (2018, March 12). NOTICE – Requirement to Identify Body Worn Video Recordings – Reminder and Clarification. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on February 16, 2021.

Body-Worn Cameras

On April 28, 2015, the LA Board of Police Commissioners approved LAPD use of BWCs, in part, to promote accountability and provide additional information regarding certain contacts with members of the public. At the beginning of 2020, LAPD reiterated the importance of building community trust through transparency and made more cameras available to officers working uniformed, public-facing assignments.¹⁰¹

Provision 3/579.15 identifies the policies related to BWCs and identifies a number of situations when officers are required to activate their BWCs, which includes uses of force and crowd management and control involving enforcement or investigative contacts. To the extent possible, officers are required to activate their BWC prior to initiating the activity that necessitates recording and are required to continue recording until the activity has ended. Provision 3/579.15 also requires officers to upload all of their recordings to the department's secure storage site and identify the event type and other information that best describes the content of each video they record. Officers are also required to document any portion of an incident on all administrative and investigative reports.¹⁰²

As it relates to uses of force, Provision 3/579.15 includes separate procedures for officers reviewing BWC footage in CUOF incidents, while NCUOF incidents follow the standard procedure detailed above. In CUOF incidents, officers are prohibited from reviewing their BWC footage until authorized by the assigned FID investigator. Once authorized, the officer may view their recording, as well as

relevant recordings from other potential BWCs, prior to being interviewed by investigators.¹⁰³

Provision 3/579.15 also identifies responsibilities for supervisors assigned to units with BWC-equipped officers and Watch Commanders. Immediately following a CUOF situation, supervisors are required to take possession of the officer's BWC, ensure the recording has stopped, power off the device, and maintain custody of the device until it is transferred to FID. Supervisors are also responsible for reviewing relevant recordings prior to submitting any administrative reports, including NCUOF investigations. Supervisors and Watch Commanders are also responsible for ensuring that officers are following all BWC policies, procedures, and trainings.¹⁰⁴

In addition to Provision 3/579.15, a notice disseminated from the LAPD Office of Constitutional Policing and Policy directs all officers to have their cameras, "powered on (in buffer mode) and ready to activate at all times when deployed to the field."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, January 30). NOTICE – Body Worn Video Kit Accountability and Availability. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on February 16, 2021.

¹⁰² See footnote 72.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Los Angeles Police Department. (2018, December 20). NOTICE – Powering Off Body-Worn Camera Devices While in Department Facilities. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on February 16, 2021.

Crowd Dispersal and Dispersal Orders

Provision 1/548 acknowledges, “When the City is confronted with a situation which may escalate into a riot, the Department must establish control of the situation by reacting quickly and committing sufficient resources to control the situation.”¹⁰⁶ Similarly, LAPD Directive No. 11 explains that, “when group behavior appears to be unlawful, aggressive, or otherwise uncontrollable, it is reasonable for the assembly to be declared unlawful.”¹⁰⁷ The Directive suggests that the dispersal order make clear that the crowd is expected to leave the area immediately and include a warning that force, which could result in serious injury, and/or arrest. It continues that the dispersal order, “must be given in a manner reasonably believed to be heard and understood by the intended audience,” and recommends repeating the dispersal order multiple times from various locations.¹⁰⁸

While there is no specific Provision regarding documentation of dispersal orders, Directive 11 does include, “Regardless of the delivery method, the name of the individual giving the dispersal order and the date and time each order was given should be documented.”¹⁰⁹ Likewise, although an example dispersal order is provided in the Directive, and was provided in some of the Event Action Plans developed during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, there is no requirement to communicate the exact language in the sample. LAPD also recommends that when dispersal orders are issued: they should be given using an amplified loudspeaker system; if feasible, an officer should be sent to the far side of the crowd to record the dispersal order; and, if possible, provide a reasonable amount of time to disperse and a clear route to do so.¹¹⁰

Mass Arrests

California Penal Code includes multiple sections related to individuals who choose to disregard dispersal orders. Section 409 establishes, “Every person remaining present at the place of any riot, rout, or unlawful assembly, after the same has been lawfully warned to disperse, except public officers and persons assisting them in attempting to disperse the same, is guilty of a misdemeanor.”¹¹¹ Similarly, Section 416(a) establishes, “If two or more persons assemble for the purpose of disturbing the public peace, or committing any unlawful act, and do not disperse on being desired or commanded so to do by a public officer, the persons so offending are severally guilty of a misdemeanor.”¹¹² These two sections provide the foundation for LAPD to effect arrests to regain control in situations where First Amendment assemblies and protests have devolved into criminal events.

¹⁰⁶ See footnote 72.

¹⁰⁷ See footnote 77.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ See footnote 71.

¹¹¹ State of California. (1872). State of California Penal Code, Section 409. https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PEN§ionNum=409.

¹¹² State of California. (1989). State of California Penal Code, Section 416. https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PEN§ionNum=416.

LAPD does not have a provision that clearly defines the use of mass arrests. In fact, in its Unlawful Assembly Checklist, LAPD provides a list of recommended penal, vehicle, and municipal codes that can be cited as possible charges—and evidentiary recommendations—when effecting mass arrests.¹¹³ Some LAPD personnel indicated to the NPF assessment team that mass arrests were an effective strategy in regaining control of riotous situations during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.¹¹⁴

Limiting Mass Arrests during First Amendment Assemblies

The Metropolitan (DC) Police Department’s standard operating procedure (SOP), Handling First Amendment Assemblies and Mass Demonstrations, states “the Department will make reasonable efforts to employ non-arrest methods of crowd management as the primary means of maintaining order.” The SOP also establishes, “If the issuing official recommends that high volume arrests be commenced, the incident commander shall satisfy himself or herself that probable cause exists for the arrest of each person to be arrested.”

Source: Metropolitan Police Department. (2016, December 13). SOP-16-01 (Handling First Amendment Assemblies and Mass Demonstrations). https://go.mpdconline.com/GO/SOP_16_01.pdf

National policing best practices assert that when possible, law enforcement organizations should avoid mass detentions and arrests in favor of more differentiated, targeted responses.¹¹⁵ Conducting differentiated responses by focusing arrests on individuals who are engaging in violence allows police to continue to facilitate the peaceful and lawful activities of other protesters exercising their First Amendment rights.¹¹⁶ However, to enter into an uncooperative and violent crowd to engage and arrest agitators requires sufficient personnel and targeted strategy to form arrest teams that can move through a crowd, make an arrest(s) and extract arrestees; this is far easier said than done. If the number of properly trained and equipped officers available is insufficient to accomplish such a tactical objective, the officers risk being trapped in the crowd which could lead to a much more serious crisis and to higher uses of force, injuries, and arrests.

¹¹³ Los Angeles Police Department (2017, October 27). Unlawful Assembly Checklist – Updated. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

¹¹⁴ NPF assessment team interviews with LAPD personnel. January 11, 2021 through February 10, 2021.

¹¹⁵ Policing Project at NYU School of Law. (2020, October). Policing Protests to Protect Constitutional Rights and Public Safety. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58a33e881b631bc60d4f8b31/t/5f9af5fe6b0e0f0c265ffdb8/1603991043508/POLICING+PROTESTS+TO+PROTECT+CONSTITUTIONAL+RIGHTS+AND+PUBLIC+SAFETY+10-29.pdf>

¹¹⁶ Maguire, E.R. (2016, July). New directions in protest policing. St. Louis University public law review, 35: 67-108.

Training

Basic Training: The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) mandates all officers in the state to complete a minimum mandatory curriculum of 664 hours and includes scenario demonstrations and tests. The 664 hours are divided into 41 topics, including communication, skills for law enforcement, and patrol techniques. Topics pertinent to responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests, include Handling Disputes/Crowd Control.¹¹⁷ However, it was not until October 2020 that a POST course specifically included the National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS).¹¹⁸

Training Specific to Protests and Demonstrations: In addition to the California POST requirements and the traditional LAPD academy and in-service requirements, LAPD provides multiple training courses specifically related to various components of First Amendment assemblies and protests. Each year since 2007, all LAPD recruits have been provided crowd control training in the academy.¹¹⁹ This Crowd Management and Control for Patrol training course, provides, “the policy, procedures, and laws related to public assemblies, crowd management and control and practice the ‘Mobile Field Force concept.’”¹²⁰ In 2010, a basic Multiple Assault Counter-Terrorism Action Capabilities (MACTAC) course was added to the academy to teach recruits about immediate deployment of teams or squads and how to rescue innocent civilians.¹²¹ In addition to these two specific courses, multiple courses in the academy integrate the concepts of de-escalation, communication, and appropriate levels of use of force.

In Service Training: In terms of in-service training, LAPD began providing approximately 10 hours of training on 21st Century Crowd management in 2007. The following year, LAPD also conducted a separate eight-hour day on 21st Century Crowd Management in-service training for command staff. In-service Incident Management Training was also delivered beginning in 2008, including eight hours for command staff. In 2009, the MACTAC Basic course was also introduced in in-service training and provided to the entire department. In 2010 and 2011, an in-service e-learning Crowd Management Update course was required of all sworn LAPD personnel. In 2012 and 2013, the in-service training was adjusted and in addition to the MACTAC Basic, a four-hour CMD Staff Crowd Management course and a four-hour Occupy LA Overview were added.

Beginning in 2014, the in-service training was adjusted again due to deployment issues and a mandatory department-wide focus on “Preservation of Life.” Command staff were provided two additional sessions on crowd management and control with department experts and community advocates in a “Conversations in 21st Century Policing” training and a four-hour “Ferguson Overview & Lessons Learned in Crowd Management & Control Debrief.” In 2016 and 2017, LAPD priorities and in-service

¹¹⁷ California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. (2020, October 30). Regular Basic Course. State of California.

<https://post.ca.gov/regular-basic-course>

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). LAPD Training Overview, Tactics Related to Mobile Field Force Crowd Management & Control. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

¹²⁰ Los Angeles Police Department. (2011, April 12). Crowd Management and Control for Patrol Expanded Course Outline. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

¹²¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2019, November). Session 2–Multi-Assault Counter Terrorism Action Capabilities.

were redirected to support mandatory training on the new Use of Force policy, less lethal overview, and introduction of the 40mm less-lethal launcher. In each year since 2018, in-service training has included a course entitled “Integrating Communication, De-Escalation, and Crowd Control.”¹²²

Additionally, LAPD offers a 40-hour Watch Commander School to ensure that potential watch commanders understand the purpose of their roles and functions in the notification process, identify functions of the process, and identify common errors to avoid. Furthermore, LAPD provides specialized units opportunities to train and to select the topics they train on. The Metropolitan Division is provided one day per month to train on tactical responses to different scenarios, including First Amendment assemblies and protests.



¹²² Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). LAPD Training Overview, Tactics Related to Mobile Field Force Crowd Management & Control. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on August 31, 2020.

Chapter One Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1.1: Following the violent Rodney King protests in South LA in 1992, the LAPD made significant changes to their protocols in response to civil unrest, setting a national model for law enforcement policy and training.

Finding 1.2: LAPD, like many police departments across the country had well-developed crowd management policies and practices that had proven successful during previous events. Those policies and practices were inadequate to handle the disparate groups, or to identify leaders amongst the protesters and address the level of violence.

Recommendation 1.2.1: LAPD should synthesize the relevant provisions spread throughout the current Department and clearly establish guidelines for the coordination, facilitation, and management of First Amendment assemblies and protests. This single provision should include relevant components of responding to planned and spontaneous events, managing such events, identifying and quickly obtaining additional staffing and resources, determining and declaring an unlawful assembly, crowd management and control, public information and communications, and use of force and less lethal documentation. Other large agencies, including the San Diego Police Department, have recently published similar synthesized policies.¹²³

Recommendation 1.2.2: LAPD should review national and international best practices regarding the impact of police actions on First Amendment assembly and protest participants.¹²⁴

Recommendation 1.2.3: LAPD should consider developing special unit(s) to establish contact with activists and demonstrators before, during, and after protests. As a consequence of the failure of the police to control riots during the EU Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden (2001), the police developed a new special tactic for crowd management. The aim of the tactic is to achieve de-escalation. “Dialogue officers” were trained and deployed to establish contact with demonstrators before, during and after protests and to link the organizers of the events and police commanders. Similar units have been developed and deployed in response to civil unrest in England.¹²⁵ Similar units were deployed in Portland during protests and counter-protests in 2019. Following the 2016, civil unrest in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department and community created the Community Conversation Team to deescalate and engage protesters.

¹²³ San Diego Police Department. (2021, February 17). First Amendment Activity Facilitation and Management. <https://ca-times.brightspotcdn.com/04/ac/754ed3ba44529a8b7b9cf47368a8/sdpd-protest-policy.pdf>

¹²⁴ See footnote 115.

¹²⁵ Holgersson, S. and Knutsson, J., (2011). Dialogue policing – a means for less crowd violence? *Crime Prevention Studies*, 26, 191-216. Gorringer, Hugo, Clifford Scott, and Michael Rosie. (2012). Dialogue Police, Decision Making, and the Management of Public Order During Protest Crowd Events. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*. 9.10.1002/jip.1359. Waddington, D. (2017). Police Liaison Approaches to Managing Political Protest: A Critical Analysis of a Prominent UK Example. In: Bayer, P., Karlovic, R., Akhgar, B., Marakaria, G. (eds) *Community Policing – A European Perspective*. Advanced Sciences and Technologies for Security Applications. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53396-4_7

Finding 1.3: Although it aligned with LAPD’s use of force provisions and procedures, documentation of uses of force during protests and demonstrations—including the deployment of less lethal munitions—was inconsistent by LAPD members.

Recommendation 1.3.1: LAPD should establish a clear policy, process, and documentation requirement for requesting and receiving less lethal munitions, particularly during the response to First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Senior level command staff and first-line supervisors made similar observations to the NPF assessment team that nobody was responsible for maintaining awareness of less lethal munitions.¹²⁶ Multiple LAPD personnel relayed to the NPF assessment team that officers would “fill their trunks” with less lethal munitions without any documentation of where they were being used, in what scenarios, and who deployed them.¹²⁷ This was exacerbated by breakdowns in command and communication but has a significant impact on transparency and accountability.

Finding 1.4: Some LAPD personnel had not been provided contemporary training on crowd management, mobile field force, supervision, de-escalation, or the use of less-lethal instruments prior to the First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations from May 27 through June 7, 2020.

Many of the LAPD training bulletins, courses, and directives related to crowd management and control were outdated. For example, the Mobile Field Force Training Bulletin was last updated in August 2006¹²⁸; the Use of Force – Tactics Directive on Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control was last updated in June 2011¹²⁹; the Use of Force – Tactics Directive on Tactical De-Escalation Techniques was last updated in October 2016¹³⁰; the Crowd Management and Control for Management was last updated in June 2007¹³¹; and, the similar course for patrol was last updated in November 2012.¹³²

Recommendation 1.4.1: LAPD should continue to serve as a national model for law enforcement by developing strategies, tactics, and Mobile Field Force teams to more effectively respond to these types of First Amendment assemblies and protests, which are becoming more frequent in the City and nationwide.

Finding 1.5: During the initial days of the protest, the number of disparate groups, the pace at which the protests accelerated, and the level of violence precluded the highly trained and experienced LAPD bike unit from successfully completing its mission. As the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests continued, the bike units were used to facilitate organized movements and rolling traffic stops.

¹²⁶ NPF assessment team interviews with LAPD personnel. December 7, 2020 through March 3, 2021.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Los Angeles Police Department. “Training Bulletin: Mobile Field Force Concept – Part II Mobile Tactics.” August 2006. Provided to NPF assessment team electronically on August 31, 2020.

¹²⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. “Los Angeles Police Department Use of Force – Tactics Directive No. 16 Tactical De-Escalation Techniques.” October 2016. Provided to NPF assessment team electronically on August 31, 2020.

¹³⁰ See footnote 77.

¹³¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2007, June 15). “Los Angeles Police Department Crowd Management and Control for Management Expanded Course Outline.” Provided to NPF assessment team electronically on August 31, 2020.

¹³² Ibid.

Finding 1.6: The National Guard was mobilized, responded to the City, and were used to protect critical infrastructure and major intersections and thoroughfares. The presence of the National Guard freed LAPD personnel for assignments related to crowd management and control.

Recommendation 1.6.1: Elected officials and LAPD leadership should weigh the risk and benefits of requesting National Guard assets sooner in future First Amendment assemblies and protests to support police operations, protect critical infrastructure, and provide a neutral presence.

Recommendation 1.6.2: The City should develop and widely distribute a well-coordinated message about the deployment of the National Guard, prior to, during and following their deployment in an effort to avoid them being seen as an occupying force. Messaging should include why the decision was made to request them, where they may be seen in the city, what their assignments may be and when they will be able to leave.

Finding 1.7: While LAPD has clear policies around use of force, crowd management, and other relevant pieces of responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests, they do not have one policy directing response specifically to large-scale, fluid, city-wide civil unrest that turns violent or contains violence.

Recommendation 1.7.1: LAPD should consider developing an overarching 'response to fluid dynamic protests and civil unrest' policy that provides for the nuances of this type of event, incorporates critical thinking skills and offers decision making models to guide at what points uses of force and relevant tools are permitted to be used by LAPD officers.¹³³

¹³³ See footnote 115.

Chapter Two: Leadership and Incident Command

The City of Los Angeles (LA) and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) are recognized as leaders in managing First Amendment assemblies, protests, and demonstrations and have provided training and guidance to police departments nationally and internationally.

However, following the death of George Floyd, LA and the nation saw unprecedented protests, violence, and destruction. City and law enforcement leaders in LA failed to recognize the extent to which members of the LA community shared the concerns, anger, and pain of communities across the nation. They also failed to recognize the extent to which those participating in the protests in the LA community would participate in acts of violence directed at private property, government facilities, members of the public, and law enforcement—which was also true of elected officials and law enforcement leaders across the country.

City Leadership and Incident Command

LA is a Mayor-Council-Commission form of government in which the Mayor, City Attorney, and Controller are elected by the residents of the city at large every four years and the City Council consists of 15 members who are elected by the residents of their geographic districts.¹³⁴ The city government type is considered a “strong mayor,” in which the mayor is the chief executive officer and centralizes executive power; appoints and removes the heads of city agencies, chief administrative officers of certain departments, and members of the boards of commissioners identified in the city charter; prepares and submits an annual budget to the council; establishes procedures, policies, and executive orders necessary to effectively manage and supervise all responsibilities to which they are entrusted; prepares an annual budget for the City Council; and, represents the City.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, the City Council is solely responsible for passing ordinances of municipal concern and legislation.¹³⁶ As a “strong mayor” form of government, the mayor is the primary official leading the city government’s response. Therefore, the Mayor’s Office has a considerable amount of influence in the overall tenor and mission of the response to emergencies in the city, including those managed by LAPD.

In LA, the response to large scale security events are coordinated from the City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC is, “the focal point for coordination of the City’s emergency planning, training, response, and recovery efforts” for all hazards and disasters that require involvement by multiple City departments.¹³⁷ The operational department that manages the EOC and conducts the day-to-day tasks is the Emergency Operations Organization (EOO), which was created by ordinance in 1980, at the time making Los Angeles the only local government to have an EOO. The EOO is supervised by the Emergency Operations Board (EOB), “during all periods of emergency preparation, response and recovery,” and is comprised of, “the general managers of the Police, Fire, Airports, Building and Safety, the City Administrative Officer (CAO), Emergency Management, General Services, Harbor, Information Technology Agency, Personnel, Recreation and Parks, Transportation and Water and Power Department, a Public Works Commissioner and the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA).”¹³⁹

¹³⁴ City of Los Angeles. (2021). Form of Government. <https://www.lacity.org/government/popular-information/form-government>.

¹³⁵ City of Los Angeles. https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/los_angeles/latest/lac/0-0-0-568.

¹³⁶ City of Los Angeles. https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/los_angeles/latest/lac/0-0-0-630.

¹³⁷ City of Los Angeles. (2021). Emergency Operations Center. <https://emergency.lacity.org/eoc>.

¹³⁸ City of Los Angeles. (2021). Emergency Operations Organization. <https://emergency.lacity.org/eoo>.

¹³⁹ City of Los Angeles. (2021). Emergency Operations Board. <https://emergency.lacity.org/emergency-operations-board>.

The EOB is permanently chaired by the LAPD Chief of Police and the Fire Department chief is the vice-chair.¹⁴⁰ There is also an Emergency Management Committee, which includes different representatives from the same agencies as well as other relevant City stakeholders.¹⁴¹

Figure 1: Los Angeles Emergency Incident Command Structure



Within this multi-level structure, personnel and representatives from the relevant City agencies are required to complete the Incident Command System (ICS) courses associated with their roles and responsibilities. At the highest level, the representatives of City agencies and City elected officials that are in the EOC for major events, complete regular ICS trainings and have worked together to coordinate the citywide response to regular incidents.¹⁴² In addition to the ICS requirements for public safety personnel, the Mayor's public safety staff are required to complete ICS IS 100—Introduction to the ICS, IS 200 – ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents, IS 700 – An Introduction to [the National Incident Management System] NIMS, IS 800 – National Response Framework an Introduction, and IS 907 – Active Shooter: What You Can Do, as well as a City Emergency Operations Center 101 and 201 course administered by the City Emergency Management Division.¹⁴³

The City-wide EOC was initially activated on March 16, 2020 at Level 1—the highest level of activation—to support the coordination of information and resources related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and remained active throughout 2020 and into 2021.¹⁴⁴ Personnel from multiple City agencies—including elected City officials and

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ City of Los Angeles. (2021). Emergency Management Committee. <https://emergency.lacity.org/emc>

¹⁴² NPF assessment team interview with City of Los Angeles elected official. February 11, 2021.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ City of Los Angeles. (2020, July 7). Emergency Operations Board. Minutes. https://ens.lacity.org/epd/eobminutes/epdeobminutes211143507_07072020.pdf.

LAPD command staff—were present in the EOC and were effectively leveraging the NIMS structure to address the COVID-19 pandemic. City officials had also established a virtual joint information center (JIC) and were well-rehearsed in coordinating public messaging related to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁴⁵

When the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests began on the evening of May 27, 2020, personnel from City agencies—including elected City officials and LAPD command staff—were already in the EOC and operating under the NIMS/ICS framework.

As the protests intensified, a separate incident command post was established by the LAPD and many of the agencies represented in the EOC provided additional representatives to staff this new command post. Within the new command post, a representative from Mayor Garcetti’s office was regularly present and the Office of the CAO was in regular contact with LAPD to ensure proper documentation and management of budget allocations related to their response.

LAPD Incident Command

The LAPD Manual establishes the department’s command structure, particularly during emergency situations. Provision 3/108.20 identifies the Office of the Chief of Police as the primary Department Command Post, except when the Office of the Chief of Police is closed, in which case the Department Command Post is the Department Operations Center (DOC).

Provision 3/108.60 further describes that the DOC is activated as a temporary division during major or serious unusual occurrences to: coordinate the Department’s emergency control activities; collect and disseminate information from the Field Command Post(s); determine the needs for, and provide, personnel, equipment, and supplies to the Field

Commander; maintain chronological logs, situation maps, and situation reports; and, complete necessary reports regarding the incident and a final report for submission to the Chief.”¹⁴⁶

In addition to the primary command post, Provision 3/108.40 Field Command Post allows for the establishment of a Field Command Post by a field commander, for the purposes of: direction operations in the field during emergency incidents; collecting information pertinent to the incident and relaying it to the DOC; requesting personnel, equipment and supplies from the DOC; and, requesting assistance from other agencies through the DOC.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ NPF assessment team interview with City of Los Angeles elected official. February 11, 2021.

¹⁴⁶ See footnote 72.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Figure 2: LAPD Incident Command Structure

EOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Operations Center (EOC) • Citywide Incident Command Post
DOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAPD Department Operations Center (DOC) • Coordinated emergency control, collected and disseminated information, coordinated staffing and resource, completed department-wide reports.
OCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAPD Operations - Central Bureau (OCB) • Served as primary incident command post initially. Continued to serve as the lead bureau command post and location of the Incident Commander
FCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAPD Field Command Posts (FCP) • Directed operations in each of the bureaus, collected information directly from the field, requests resources/staffing and other assistance through DOC.

On May 27, the LAPD established a separate incident command post from the City's EOC, in its Operations Central Bureau (OCB) at Los Angeles Fire Department Station 4, approximately four blocks southeast of City Hall, to monitor the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests and designated an incident commander (IC). This command post was established by the DOC, as identified in Provision 3/108.60. The following night, the command post moved to the courtyard of LAPD Headquarters, across the street from City Hall. On May 29, the DOC re-established the primary command post in a large parking lot approximately two blocks away from the original location. This parking lot is a common location used by the City and LAPD to station command posts for planned events that occur downtown because of its spaciousness and proximity to City Hall and LAPD Headquarters.¹⁴⁸ The command post remained in the large parking lot for the duration of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ NPF assessment team interview with LAPD Commander, January 11, 2021 and City of Los Angeles elected official, February 11, 2021.

¹⁴⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). AAR Chrono Time Log. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on October 28, 2020.

Although the command post was established with an IC, the rest of the traditional NIMS support structure was not immediately established as the number of protesters quickly swelled in the early hours of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests on May 27.¹⁵⁰ The lack of a fully staffed command post with the technology to facilitate complicated information sharing, analysis, mobilization and communication between various components within LAPD, including between the IC and Deputy IC, negatively impacted the LAPD response.

Additionally, without clearly identified leaders of the Planning, Logistics, and Finance Administration Sections, internal coordination and communication were challenged. Without these sections, the IC and Deputy IC did not have access to the full breadth of LAPD resources, which hampered the department's ability to deploy mobile field forces (MFFs) with recent training and high levels of tactical understanding, and to gain control in certain instances. The extent of the protests and the level of violence associated with them overwhelmed the LAPD and led to resources being deployed without clear missions or assignments.¹⁵¹

Likewise, members of the LAPD command staff and City elected officials were in and out of the OCB command post at various times, which added to the confusion regarding decision-making authorities, roles, and responsibilities. Some LAPD personnel suggested that when members of the LAPD executive staff engaged in field operations, it caused a level of confusion.¹⁵² However, the NPF assessment team did not hear during interviews that members of the command staff directly influenced decisions made by the IC and Deputy IC in the command post or in the field.

In addition to the command post in OCB, on May 28, the Forward Operating Platforms (FOPs) that had been established in Operations West Bureau (OWB) and Operations Valley Bureau (OVB) to coordinate local responses to the COVID-19 pandemic transitioned their focus to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations. Operations South Bureau (OSB) established its FOP on May 28.¹⁵³ Each FOP served as the single area for resources to be assigned and tactics to be coordinated for events occurring in that bureau and were staffed with bureau command personnel.¹⁵⁴

The LAPD response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests was primarily coordinated out of the OCB command post, including having all LAPD personnel and resources in a single staging area, with the assistance of the OWB, OVB, and OSB FOPs until May 30—as opposed to a fully-functional EOC with field-based command posts. By May 30, it became apparent that the challenges of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests—including the number of geographic areas within the City that were involved; the number of simultaneous events and the number of protesters at each; the fluid movements of the crowds; the impacts and influence of social media; and the level of violence, property destruction, and looting—posed challenges to the LAPD's well-practiced standard operating procedures and crowd management and control strategies. As some LAPD personnel indicated to the NPF assessment team, initiating citywide operations from a single command post and a single staging area

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² NPF assessment team focus group with LAPD personnel. February 26, 2021.

¹⁵³ See footnote 149.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

created logistical problems as LAPD personnel were required to drive from their bureau across the city, to form a mobile field force (MFF), which was then deployed to the bureau from which they had just come.¹⁵⁵

Recognizing the challenges associated with responding to the citywide and constantly evolving nature of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests from a single command center, LAPD's leadership shifted to a more decentralized system in which the FOPs were afforded additional autonomy. Bureau commanders and their staff were given greater latitude in determining the breadth of, and managing, their response consistent with geographic opportunities and challenges. Some bureau commanders understood and more-fully adhered to the NIMS structure, also inviting relevant stakeholders from their area into the command post. One of the bureau command posts leveraged security personnel from the local Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the Logistics Section, to gather and share real-time information.¹⁵⁶ In other cases, bureau commanders further decentralized the decision-making, passing it to captains and those personnel in direct contact with protesters. Additionally, some bureaus, Operations West and Operations South, were able to optimize community relationships to reduce levels of violence as well as to facilitate peaceful First Amendment assemblies and protests.

While the decision to decentralize alleviated the majority of the command challenges, some logistical challenges remained. Although the DOC remained the primary command post, communication between the FOPs and the DOC (and vice versa), clearly understanding who was in charge and the overall mission of the response, and logistical challenges continued regarding LAPD's citywide response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Staffing and Resource Allocation

Despite having internal information and intelligence personnel, participating in local and regional fusion centers, and collecting information from local BIDs and other police-community partnerships, the City of LA and LAPD command staff were slow to recognize and effectively react to the large and varied SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

¹⁵⁵ NPF assessment team interview with LAPD Commander. February 4, 2021.

¹⁵⁶ NPF assessment team interview with Business Improvement District members. January 25, 2021.

Lost Opportunities: Initiating the Tactical Alert

LAPD Terms Defined

Tactical Alert: The preliminary stage of the Department Mobilization Plan. A Tactical Alert is an announcement of the anticipated redistribution of on-duty officers to achieve personnel levels necessary for controlling an emergency.

Tactical Alert, Modified: Provides the Director of Emergency Operations, Incident Commander or Communications Division watch commander a method of holding over watches without the disruption of “routine” police duties.

Mobilization: The principal Department plan to marshal personnel resources for control of a Major Unusual Occurrence. The preliminary stage of a Mobilization is a Tactical Alert. A Mobilization includes the immediate implementation of 12-hour A and B watches, the deferment of days off, and the recalling of off-duty officers.

Source: Email from LAPD sergeant to NPF assessment team. March 24, 2021.

May 27, 2020

Beginning at approximately 3:00pm on May 27, nearly 100 protesters started to march downtown in the area around City Hall. As the group of protesters began to grow, the IC requested five supervisors and 50 officers to respond to the staging area. Shortly after, however, a new request was broadcast to send an MFF of 42 LAPD personnel instead. As the number of protesters continued to grow, protesters separated into different groups and marched in different directions. An LAPD Aerial Unit was launched to provide situational awareness, but the number of LAPD personnel assigned downtown were quickly outnumbered. In an attempt to get more officers on scene, a modified tactical alert was declared for OCB only. The alert was canceled later that evening.¹⁵⁷ California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers responded when a group of demonstrators marched towards, and onto, the 110 Freeway. The LAPD officers and CHP officers were outnumbered and the decision was made to address problematic locations individually and then transition resources to the next area of concern. This continued into the early morning hours of May 28.

¹⁵⁷ See footnote 149.

May 28, 2020

Again, in the early evening on May 28, small groups of protesters began to march in the downtown area. The number of OCB personnel available in the area was consistent with regular operational staffing levels. As vandalism started to occur and a group of demonstrators again marched in the direction of the 110 Freeway, it became apparent that the Bicycle Unit and plainclothes officers that had been deployed to monitor the crowd were not enough. Officers also witnessed individuals gathering rocks and bottles and vandalizing businesses as they marched downtown.

At approximately 8:00pm, a tactical alert was declared for OCB only, but was modified by a declaration of a Citywide Tactical Alert approximately 55 minutes later.¹⁵⁸ The Citywide Tactical Alert was intended to fully mobilize LAPD personnel and resources to help respond to the various groups of demonstrators in the downtown area, including one large group that was marching towards the 110 Freeway. Once again, an LAPD Air Unit was launched to provide situational awareness as a large group of demonstrators congregated downtown, outnumbering available LAPD personnel. The group eventually dispersed and less than three hours after the Citywide Tactical Alert was declared, it was cancelled.¹⁵⁹

May 29, 2020

Based on the occurrences of the previous two days, early in the afternoon on May 29, OCB and OWB requested additional resources to help manage potential crowd movement, but the request was denied by the command post. Shortly thereafter, another Citywide Tactical Alert was declared, this time by an LAPD Assistant Chief. While waiting for the additional resources and personnel, the Air Unit was once again deployed to provide overhead situational awareness. The Air Unit advised that demonstrators were moving too fast to set blocking forces to contain them in some cases, and in others, bicycle officers continued to attempt to follow groups of approximately 100 protesters. After the protesters attempted to surround motorcycle officers assisting with traffic control and plainclothes officers in the crowd advised that protesters were spray-painting a bus stop, tensions escalated. Additional requests were made for multiple MFFs, and LAPD and CHP personnel made attempts to establish blocking forces to prevent protesters from getting onto the 110 Freeway again.

Despite the Citywide Tactical Alert being declared hours earlier, by the early evening, LAPD personnel downtown were once again severely outnumbered, and requests for additional MFF units were denied because there were none available. The MFF units attempting to respond were delayed from arriving downtown because of gridlocked traffic and ended up responding to requests for additional units to control the group of protesters that had gathered on the 110 Freeway. Large groups of protesters also formed in other areas across the City, breaking windows and destroying police vehicles they passed and further overwhelming LAPD personnel. Despite the widespread looting, rioting, and chaos, the Citywide Tactical Alert was canceled in the morning hours of May 30.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

May 30 – June 5, 2020

Another Citywide Tactical Alert was declared just before noon on May 30. This Citywide Tactical Alert remained in place until June 5 for all A- and B-watch units who were not actively assigned to SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.¹⁶⁰ This Citywide Tactical Alert resulted in a full mobilization of LAPD personnel and resources. All sworn personnel were reassigned to 12-hour shifts (A and B-watch), an IC was assigned to each of the two watches, and the Communications Division was instructed to encourage all callers for non-emergency situations to file reports online or at their local station. While the Citywide Tactical Alert provided consistency across the LAPD in terms of shifts and staff availability, a lack of consistent communication between the ICs of A and B Watch continued, which contributed to inconsistencies in mission, resource availability, and deployment.

Resource Deployment and Mobilization

Even when the Citywide Tactical Alert was implemented and LAPD was fully mobilized, the agency faced challenges in the deployment of resources and personnel. According to LAPD, the MFF concept was developed to supplement conventional resources for restoring conditions to normal as soon as possible during any unusual occurrence or civil disturbance. The MFFs are designed to combine elements of flexibility, rapid deployment, and mobility to effectively control and disperse disorderly groups. The minimum operating component for an MFF is 12 LAPD personnel, a squad leader and 11 officers, along with three vehicles; however, the ideal deployment is 15 personnel, a squad leader and 14 officers, along with four vehicles.¹⁶¹ During the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, MFFs were organized based on who was available and did not always include the same team members from one day to the next, and some officers were sent to bureaus in which they had not worked before, did not know their supervisors or local community members.

Coordination regarding which of the geographic FOPs would receive additional staff and resources was primarily informed by the command staff of the FOPs. Decisions at the incident command post were largely made based on information gathered by officers and captains from divisions within each of the four FOPs. Within the FOPs, personnel and resource requests were made based on different sources of information, in some cases including social media. Some division personnel were able to independently search social media or leverage relationships with local business security personnel and private companies to stay abreast of First Amendment assemblies and protests that were being planned in their geographical area of operation. Other divisions and bureaus, though, were outmaneuvered and underprepared at least in part because of the lack of coordinated information gathering from social media and other intelligence sources at either the FOP or the command post.

The challenges associated with individual officer, MFF, and specialized assignments; clear definitions of allowable tactics and strategies; agency-wide alerts; and, a clearly communicated overall mission of the response negatively impacted the ability of LAPD to effectively and efficiently respond to the more chaotic situations that occurred during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2006, August). Training Bulletin: Mobile Field Force Concept – Part II Mobile Tactics.

Mutual Aid

Local Agencies

As the nature and primary locations of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests ebbed and flowed, LAPD both received and provided mutual aid. For the entirety of the May 27 through June 7 timeframe, LAPD received mutual aid from LASD. While LASD did not participate in any tactical formations or frontline engagements with LAPD, they did effect a number of arrests, primarily for persons violating nightly county curfews. LASD also provided regular aid in processing the hundreds of persons arrested by LAPD. The two agencies frequently work together, respond to similar events, and have had a mutual aid operational plan agreement since 2013.¹⁶² Although there are no formalized memoranda of understanding or agreements between LAPD and LASD specifically regarding operations during First Amendment assemblies and protests, the mutual aid operational plan agreement does state, “The responsible local official in whose jurisdiction an incident has occurred requiring mutual aid, unless otherwise provided, shall remain in charge at such incident including the direction of such personnel and equipment provided him through the operation of such mutual aid operations plan.”¹⁶³

Additionally, on the night of May 30, 43 officers from Santa Barbara and 62 from Ventura County arrived in Los Angeles to provide additional assistance to OWB.¹⁶⁴ The following afternoon, two LAPD MFFs were deployed to Santa Monica to provide mutual aid to the Santa Monica Police Department.¹⁶⁵

National Guard

Ultimately, after initial concern about the impact the presence of the National Guard would have, during the late night hours of May 30, the LAPD agreed that the Mayor should contact the governor to officially request National Guard personnel. The decision was made to request 2,000 personnel for the City of Los Angeles and an additional 2,000 National Guard personnel for the County of Los Angeles.¹⁶⁶ A retired member of LAPD’s command staff with previous experience in coordinating with the National Guard regarding natural disasters was engaged to serve as a liaison between the National Guard and the LAPD during their deployment.

The National Guard personnel arrived early in the morning on May 31. As they drove through the City, National Guard units heard active security sirens from buildings and observed people looting stores. The National Guard contacted LAPD personnel to respond to those locations. From there, the National Guard units deployed in the Central and West Bureaus were directed to report to the staging location for LAPD personnel.¹⁶⁷ Later on May 31, approximately 100 National Guard troops were deployed to Santa Monica to assist with First Amendment assemblies and protests there. Throughout the City of Los Angeles, National Guard personnel were assigned to conduct high-visibility security to deter looting and protect critical infrastructure and locations. For example, National Guard personnel were deployed to shopping centers including Sherman Oaks Galleria, Fashion Center, and malls in Topanga and Northridge.¹⁶⁸ Using National Guard personnel in these capacities freed up LAPD personnel to respond to the frontline needs of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations.

¹⁶² Los Angeles Police Department. (2013). Mutual Aid Operational Plan Agreement 2013. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on March 19, 2021.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ See footnote 149. LAPD also explained that after Mayor Garcetti declared a state of local emergency and requested mutual aid, the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) tracked all mutual aid resources provided to the LAPD. CalOES tracked a total of 144 law enforcement personnel that were requested and responded.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ NPF assessment team interview with City elected official. February 11, 2021.

¹⁶⁷ See footnote 149.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

Early in the morning on June 2, the decision was made in the DOC to demobilize the National Guard. However, a few minutes later, 30 National Guard personnel were directed to deploy to a shopping mall, and later the same day other National Guard personnel were deployed to Pershing Square, City Hall, and popular street corners in the Hollywood area. National Guard personnel maintained their presence in Los Angeles and staged at the Los Angeles Convention Center until June 5, when an LAPD Captain advised that the National Guard would not be deployed.¹⁶⁹ After two more days of peaceful First Amendment assemblies, the National Guard fully demobilized and left the City on June 7.¹⁷⁰



¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Email from City of Los Angeles Executive Officer to NPF assessment team. February 17, 2021.

Chapter Two Findings and Recommendations

Finding 2.1: The nature of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred in Los Angeles between May 27 and June 7, 2020 were ones that neither LAPD, nor other jurisdictions across the nation, have previously experienced nor expected. While LAPD has years of experience with responding to large First Amendment assemblies, mass demonstrations, and civil disturbances in the past—some of which have involved violence and destruction—the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests occurred during a unique and unprecedented time in the nation. Local and national political tensions, frustrations and uncertainty caused by COVID-19, and the continued national narrative decrying police, contributed to a visceral response by many demonstrators locally and nationwide—including some intent on violence.

Particularly in LA, the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests were unique in that multiple assemblies occurred at the same time in locations across the city (locations not previously impacted by civil disturbances). They involved both spontaneous and planned events, demonstrators used both social media and messaging applications and were planned and coordinated. Demonstrators used more advanced logistics and tactics to counteract known police response strategies, and they required more police and city resources than protests in the past. The simultaneous needs for specialized personnel and resources across the City to address these more contemporary tactics caused confusion and strained an LAPD system that was accustomed to responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests that occur at a single time and location. In some cases, people intent on causing violence and destruction took advantage of the spanned geographic space and time SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests to wreak havoc.

Recommendation 2.1.1: City and LAPD leaders should continue to build strong working relationships and prioritize planning, preparation, management, and training for First Amendment assembly and protest response. First Amendment assemblies and protests have occurred in Los Angeles since the Rodney King protests in 1992 and—given that LA is the second most populous city in the United States—will likely continue to take place. The LAPD and the City of Los Angeles should continue to review the totality of the 2020 protests and demonstrations and the impact on the city and the department in an effort learn from, plan and prepare for future incidents and to identify strategies and systems that worked in allowing freedom of expression while also protecting the public.

Recommendation 2.1.2: The City of Los Angeles and the LAPD should continue to review lessons learned from other large-scale First Amendment assemblies, mass demonstrations, and civil disturbances across the country and abroad to improve citywide and police department planning, preparedness, and response to similar events so as to incorporate best and promising practices. The City of Los Angeles and LAPD have been leaders in the field in responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests. However, when the peaceful assemblies devolved into chaotic and riotous events, LA and LAPD were not able to quickly adapt and respond. LA and LAPD should collect and analyze data available around civil disturbances, including damage incurred, injuries, use of force, arrest and impound, economic impact and other data collected during civil disturbances to identify systems, situations and variables that can assist in preventing and/or mitigating violence and destruction.

Recommendation 2.1.3: The LAPD should have commanders who were directly involved in responding to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests write an after-action report (AAR) that includes input from line level officers and up. These AARs—particularly the recommendations—should be synthesized and presented to the LAPD operations and training command staff.¹⁷¹ Where possible, promising practices and lessons learned should be incorporated into policy, training, and protocol.

Finding 2.2: The City of Los Angeles lacked a well-coordinated city-wide political, policy, communications, and law enforcement response mission to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred between May 27 and June 7, 2020. The City of Los Angeles' Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated and staffed prior to May 27, 2020, to coordinate the City's COVID-19 response. The EOC was under-utilized for decision-making and strategy implementation in response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 2.2.1: City officials, councilmembers, relevant City agencies, and LAPD leadership should ensure that a city-wide plan, consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), is used to manage First Amendment assemblies and protests, and that all City agencies understand, and participate in, the development and implementation of the plan. While the City of Los Angeles has used NIMS effectively to respond to natural disasters, the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests did not effectively leverage all components of NIMS—including establishing a single incident command system (ICS), fully utilizing the EOC, communicating and coordinating messaging through a Joint Information Center, and sharing information and resources across agencies. Planning and training for responses to pre-planned and spontaneous First Amendment assemblies and protests should include elected and appointed officials, law enforcement, other public safety agencies, other relevant government agencies, and relevant non-government and private sector organizations as appropriate.

Recommendation 2.2.2: The City of Los Angeles should establish one citywide incident management team (IMT)¹⁷² to lead its response to future large-scale First Amendment assemblies and incidents that involve a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction response. Beginning in 2009, LAPD established three internal IMTs—defined as, “a team of specialists familiar with all aspects of emergency management. They are experienced leaders, decision makers and strategic thinkers, self-actualized and willing to develop themselves into a cohesive team focused on managing large, complex, high consequence incidents.” The Citywide IMT should include operational public safety personnel (particularly from the LAPD IMTs), as well as representatives from the mayor's staff—and other elected and City officials—to ensure collaboration, coordination, and unity of command. The Citywide IMT should also train regularly through tabletop and full-scale exercises.

¹⁷¹ National Police Foundation. 2020. How to Conduct an After Action Review. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. <https://www.policefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/How-to-Conduct-an-AAR.pdf>

¹⁷² Also referred to as the Multi-agency Coordination Group (MAC). Online at: training.fema.gov – “Unit 5: NIMS Coordination: MAC and Joint Information System.”

Recommendation 2.2.3: All City of Los Angeles elected officials, and personnel from each of the relevant City offices and agencies, should complete the appropriate level of ICS training if they have not already done so, and take regular refresher courses. A US Department of Justice report advises, “Incident management organizations and personnel at all levels of government and within the private sector and nongovernmental organizations must be appropriately trained to improve all-hazards incident management capability...Training involves standard courses on incident command and management, incident management structure, operational coordination processes and systems—together with courses focused on discipline and agency-specific subject matter expertise—helps ensure that personnel at all jurisdictional levels and across disciplines can function effectively together during an incident.”¹⁷³

Recommendation 2.2.4: The City of Los Angeles and LAPD should conduct joint regularly-scheduled First Amendment assemblies, protest, mass violence, and other critical incident tabletop and full-scale exercises. While some LA elected officials and LAPD personnel identified the frequency with which they coordinate in response to natural disasters including earthquakes and fires, they also indicated that there are not enough exercises on other events.

Finding 2.3: Communication within LAPD—particularly in the first few days—was inconsistent between the Chief, his command staff, bureau commanders and field supervisors, and line officers. This created significant challenges regarding: (a) identifying a cogent operating philosophy; (b) determining operations during individual shifts, including when shifts started and ended; and, (c) establishing coordination and consistency between shifts. Senior level command staff and first-line supervisors made similar observations that there was confusion regarding who the Incident Commander was at times, which command post was responsible for final decisions, and what the overall LAPD strategy and mission was. This impacted every component of the LAPD response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 2.3.1: LAPD should establish a planning team that includes command staff, training, equipment, communications, logistics, and intelligence to ensure plans receive the necessary attention to detail in these areas. Identifying personnel to focus on specific areas of the plan is valuable to ensure that there is full understanding of the resources, systems, and needs and to ensure the viability of the plan.

Recommendation 2.3.2: LAPD should update and enhance its Emergency Operations Guide: Volume 5 to address all components of First Amendment Assemblies and Mass Demonstrations, as opposed to focusing on crowd management and crowd control.¹⁷⁴ The updated Guide should include: scalable strategies for, and immediate steps to take when, responding to spontaneous First Amendment assemblies and mass demonstrations; roles, responsibilities, and specific assignments for all ranks and positions as they relate to NIMS; processes for establishing and staffing a Joint Information Center (JIC) that includes relevant City stakeholders and agency representatives; and, coordinating with

¹⁷³ Bureau of Justice Assistance. “Mutual Aid: Multijurisdictional Partnerships for Meeting Regional Threats.” NCJ160113. 2005. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/210679.pdf> (accessed December 11, 2017).

¹⁷⁴ See footnote 71.

geographic command centers. The LAPD should consult with community members and organizers, civil rights attorneys, internal experts, national-level experts, and academic experts in policing.

Recommendation 2.3.3: LAPD should practice establishment of ICS in different scenarios and should develop lists of personnel with the appropriate training and capacities to fill the necessary leadership positions in each section. One of the challenges LAPD faced initially was the incomplete establishment of a command system that fully implemented NIMS/ICS. The lack of some of these positions—including Planning, Intelligence/Investigations, and Logistics—contributed to the initial lack of coordination in the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 2.4: The issuing and cancellation of Tactical Alerts contributed to confusion and frustration amongst supervisors and officers.

Recommendation 2.4.1: LAPD should establish clear processes for identifying and deploying appropriate personnel to planned and spontaneous critical incidents, including First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 2.5: LAPD did not effectively leverage intelligence and information city-wide—including publicly-available social media—that may have enhanced situational awareness of officers and their ability to rapidly assess multiple venues and deploy resources. LAPD did not fully leverage and communicate throughout the department open sources of intelligence and social media to account for the size, evolution, and adaptability of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. While the LAPD Special Events Permit Unit (SEPU), received permit requests for some of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, many more spontaneous demonstrations did not allow for the development of Event Action Plans (EAPs) or Incident Command System (ICS) plans. While many LAPD commands gathered intelligence on significant First Amendment assemblies and protests—including possibly disruptive groups—it was not compiled, deconflicted, or leveraged across the LAPD to strategically deploy resources.

Recommendation 2.5.1: LAPD should work with the community to consider collaborative approaches and technology solutions and strategies that will enhance situational awareness and improve community and officer safety.

Recommendation 2.5.2: LAPD should develop a process to ensure that intelligence and information gathered to improve public safety is appropriately incorporated in the command structure. This information should be shared promptly and consistently with the Incident Commander as well as relevant department and bureau command posts and should be factored into planning and preparedness.

Finding 2.6: LAPD should develop, implement, and review MOUs with the LASD and other law enforcement agencies to support and clearly define roles, responsibilities, and protocols to First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Chapter Three: Public Communication and Social Media

Traditional media and social media communication played significant roles and provided multiple strategic advantages to the protesters throughout the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

From the early stages, protesters used social media to voice their frustrations, to garner support and to control the narrative around First Amendment assemblies. They mired the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Public Communications Group (PCG) and command staff in a cycle of constant response, placing them in a reactive position versus proactively disseminating accurate and timely information, dispelling rumors, and correcting false statements. Social media drove the perception that the death of George Floyd was just the latest case of an officer-involved fatality of an unarmed African American in LA and around the world. Protesters quickly called for justice by posting and sharing videos and images of the death of Mr. Floyd and planning protests throughout the city. As the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests continued, protesters continued to leverage social media to frame their actions as entirely peaceful, while depicting the LAPD response to the crowds as heavy-handed and unnecessarily violent, particularly after LAPD officers deployed less-lethal weapons or used force.

Many of the First Amendment assemblies and protests in LA and across the country, were organized, coordinated, and communicated entirely through social media. Looters intent on causing destruction and intentionally overwhelming and “outmaneuvering” the traditional responses of the LAPD also effectively leveraged social media to arrange meeting locations and strategic posts throughout the city and to coordinate next steps. Most importantly, the strategic use of social media by protesters afforded them the opportunity to control the narrative, and therefore the protests from the beginning.

Public Communication

A fundamental principle of crisis and civil disturbance management is that an effective response requires communication, collaboration, and partnerships among elected officials, public safety leaders, other government agencies, and at times private sector and community organizations. By its nature, the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests were a series of rapidly evolving and dynamic events, often co-occurring in various locations throughout the city. As is often the case in the response to dynamic events, consistent and coordinated communication from the City of Los Angeles to the public was difficult.

Public Messaging during First Amendment Assemblies and Protests

Public communication and social media messaging during First Amendment assemblies and protests is imperative. Oftentimes, however, agencies can be unsure of what to communicate and how to message. Helpful questions to answer include:

- What is protected First Amendment conduct?
- What is a peaceful protest versus an unlawful protest?
- When does a peaceful protest become a threat to public safety personnel and the public and when does it become a riot?
- What protest behavior, even when unlawful, warrant use of force to generate compliance?
- What is the balance between lawful First Amendment expression and the rights of others (motorists, residents, business owners and patrons, etc.)?

Despite dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Los Angeles coordinated public messaging through a virtual joint information center (JIC). The virtual JIC included representatives from the Mayor's Office, LAPD and other public safety agencies, and other relevant city agencies.

The LAPD PCG includes sworn and civilian personnel, and at the time of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, was led by a former member of the media. The PCG serves as the liaison between the LAPD and all major media outlets; facilitates the dissemination of news releases; staffs the City Emergency Operations Center Public Information Officer position and the similar position at LAPD incident command posts; and conducts internal media relations trainings for sergeants, detectives, and watch commanders. The PCG also oversees the LAPD website and manages the overall social media strategy—including the Headquarters accounts and the accounts of 21 field divisions. The overall goal of the PCG is “to ensure that open lines of communication are maintained at all times with all segments of the greater Los Angeles community.”¹⁷⁵

In addition to coordinating public messaging, it is important that city elected and appointed officials understand the communications principles described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS). As the Federal Emergency Management Agency's guidance on NIMS affirms, “Elected and appointed officials are key players in incident management...Effective communication between...incident personnel and policy-level officials fosters trust and helps ensure that all leaders have the information they need to make informed decisions.”¹⁷⁶

NIMS and ICS should guide city officials in predetermining and coordinating roles and responsibilities and statements so that, in the event of an incident, all stakeholders—including elected officials—are prepared to help resolve critical incidents.

¹⁷⁵ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). Public Communications Group. https://www.lapdonline.org/inside_the_lapd/content_basic_view/2022_

¹⁷⁶ Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2017, October). National Incident Management System. United States Department of Homeland Security. Washington, DC. https://www.fema.gov/media-librarydata/1508151197225-ced8c60378c3936adb92c1a3ee6f6564/FINAL_NIMS_2017.pdf

Social Media During Critical Incidents

In critical incidents, law enforcement and government officials face a delicate balance between informing the public about what has occurred and ensuring the integrity of the response and any potential investigations. Frequently in these situations, they are more risk-averse, focused on accuracy of information and protecting potential evidence—even if that means “no comment”—than on quickly posting and sharing the most updated information.

While social media was ubiquitous for the demonstrators, and afforded them the opportunity to firmly grasp the attention and the narrative of the news media, and social media audience, the LAPD was almost entirely silent until it was too late. A PCG member advised that LAPD was not quick enough to use social media and share more than basic information and traditional messaging.¹⁷⁷ Others were hesitant to post anything on the LAPD Headquarters social media accounts unless it was approved up the internal chain-of-command all the way to the Chief; shared and approved by a representative from the Mayor’s Office; and, then sent back down with any edits or revisions—a process that, in a fast moving and dynamic protest environment, can take more time to complete than it does for the next protest to begin.¹⁷⁸

Despite the looting and general chaos, on May 27, LAPD posted a single message on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The message acknowledged the anger and pain of protesters, asked that protests be held in a safe and legal manner, and that the department would always facilitate freedom of speech.¹⁷⁹ The following day, LAPD posted a YouTube video of Chief Moore recognizing the frustration of community members, the fragile nature of police-community relations, and concerns regarding excessive use of force.¹⁸⁰ The LAPD Twitter account was only used to share the video of Chief Moore and to retweet a message from Mayor Garcetti. Again though, as looting and chaos occurred in the downtown area, LAPD social media was not used to communicate with the community.

As the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests continued on May 29, the first social media post related to the events was not posted until approximately 11:00pm. At that point, LAPD used its Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts to encourage people to avoid the downtown area because of the ongoing protests. LAPD also used its primary Twitter account to retweet a message from Chief Moore’s Twitter account, stating that the department would facilitate spontaneous and planned protests, but would take enforcement actions on anyone who endangers protesters, officers, or the public.¹⁸¹

In the early morning on May 30, the primary LAPD social media accounts were used to disseminate the message that an unlawful assembly had been declared throughout the downtown area, due to repeated acts of violence and property damage. Later in the afternoon, the department also posted information about the numbers of arrests and officer injuries, as well as a general statement that several police vehicles and numerous downtown businesses were vandalized, looted, and damaged on its primary social media accounts.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ NPF assessment team focus group with LAPD sergeants. February 11, 2021.

¹⁷⁸ NPF assessment team focus group with LAPD sergeants. February 11, 2021.

¹⁷⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 27). <https://www.instagram.com/p/CAtxyBHhHQv/>

¹⁸⁰ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 28). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MUGF5xw48&t=2s>

¹⁸¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 29). <https://twitter.com/LAPDChiefMoore/status/1266476381547819008>

¹⁸² Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1266804085245661185>

As the protests in the area of Pan Pacific Regional Park devolved into chaos and large-scale destruction, LAPD leveraged its primary social media accounts to encourage people to stay away from the area because of the large amount of protesters and police presence.¹⁸³ Approximately eight minutes later, LAPD disseminated that a curfew had been applied to the downtown area between 8:00pm and 5:30am, noting that violators would be subject to arrest.¹⁸⁴ LAPD also used only its Twitter account to disseminate the declaration of an unlawful assembly in the mid-Wilshire area later that night.¹⁸⁵ When the decision was made to apply the original curfew to the entire city, LAPD used its three primary social media accounts to disseminate the update.¹⁸⁶

On May 31, LAPD only used its three primary social media accounts to inform followers about the hours of the curfew. Otherwise, the department leveraged Twitter as its primary social media channel to share information. LAPD tweeted information about the deployment of the National Guard and a series of messages regarding the numbers of arrests and officer injuries, as well as a general statement that several police vehicles and numerous businesses were vandalized, looted, and damaged.¹⁸⁷ The Twitter account was also used to retweet a joint press conference of Mayor Garcetti, Chief Moore, and the chief of the Los Angeles Fire Department.¹⁸⁸

As the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations continued, LAPD continued to leverage social media to post reminders regarding the curfews, images and videos of peaceful assemblies and interactions between officers and protesters, and statements encouraging interaction between LAPD and community members.

Transparency

During the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, the only time LAPD used social media to acknowledge an individual incident involving an officer was on June 1. On May 31, protesters captured video of an incident which appeared to show an altercation between an LAPD vehicle and a group of protesters. In a single tweet, LAPD stated, “We are aware of video circulating on social media of an LAPD patrol vehicle involved in a traffic collision with a pedestrian, during one of several spontaneous protests occurring throughout the city. A traffic report was taken, and the incident is under investigation.”¹⁸⁹ By that time, the videos had been widely shared on social media and became the focus of numerous media articles.

¹⁸² Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1266804085245661185>

¹⁸³ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1266866430751805440>

¹⁸⁴ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1266868463030530051>

¹⁸⁵ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1266911752349863936>

¹⁸⁶ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1266922943965089792>

¹⁸⁷ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/lapdhq>

¹⁸⁸ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). <https://twitter.com/lapdhq>

¹⁸⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, June 1). <https://twitter.com/LAPDHQ/status/1267309149504720896>

In addition to social media, LAPD only used its website once during the May 27 through June 7, 2020 time period to issue a news release regarding a categorical use of force from the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. The news release from June 2, provides a summary of the incident that occurred on May 30.¹⁹⁰ A link to a YouTube video of a Critical Incident Community Briefing, in which the department provides video footage from several angles and a more-detailed explanation of the May 30 incident, was posted on July 14, 2020.¹⁹¹ LAPD posted a similar Critical Incident Community Briefing video recapping a police-protestor encounter on May 30 on July 31, 2020.¹⁹² The only other news release and Critical Incident Community briefing related to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests was posted on the LAPD website in early December 2020.¹⁹³

The time period between the incidents and when the information was posted allowed protesters to shape the narrative about LAPD uses of force and question LAPD's transparency about the nature of many of the incidents. On June 5, 2020, the National Lawyers Guild filed a federal class action lawsuit documenting multiple instances of alleged LAPD uses of force.¹⁹⁴ The complaint was amended on June 21, 2020, to include additional descriptions and images of alleged LAPD uses of forces against protesters.¹⁹⁵ Media articles also documented the number of complaints filed alleging excessive force and LAPD officers assigned to other roles.¹⁹⁶ While LAPD provided general information about the number of overall complaint investigations and those specifically related to allegations of excessive use of force,¹⁹⁷ no additional information was provided publicly and the use of force page on the LAPD website only covers officer-involved shootings and critical incidents.¹⁹⁸



¹⁹⁰ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, June 2). Officer-Involved-Shooting in Central Division NRF022-20bm. https://lapdonline.org/newsroom/news_view/66595

¹⁹¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, July 14). Central Area OIS 5/30/2020 (NRF022-20). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xY7J-g_izn8&feature=youtu.be

¹⁹² Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, July 31). Wilshire Area CUOF 5/30/2020 (NRF028-20). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fL5S0Po4rA&feature=youtu.be>

¹⁹³ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, December 4). Law Enforcement Related Injury (LERI) NRF029-20dm. https://www.lapdonline.org/newsroom/news_view/67078

¹⁹⁴ National Lawyers Guild. (2020, June 21). First Amended Complaint: Class Action; Injunctive Relief and Damages. US District Court Central District of California–Western Division. <https://nlg-la.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/06/BLACK-LIVES-MATTER-COMPLAINT-ECF-FILED.pdf>

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Leonard, Eric. (2020, June 18). "LAPD Officers Removed From Field While Protest Complaints Are Investigated." NBC Los Angeles. <https://www.nbcalosangeles.com/investigations/lapd-protest-arrests-police-officers-george-floyd/2382322/>

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Los Angeles Police Department. (2021). "2021 Officer Involved Shooting (O.I.S.) and Critical Incidents." https://www.lapdonline.org/use_of_force

Promising Use of Social Media During First Amendment Assemblies

The Kansas City Police Department (KCPD) in Missouri, leveraged traditional and social media and the department's website to share information about the First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations that were occurring, beginning on May 27, 2020. KCPD posted the department's policy on First Amendment assemblies and protests and shared messages of KCPD officers expressing their commitment to supporting community members' First Amendment rights. A new webpage was also created to answer questions from the public and linked to the KCPD's Response to Resistance policy—which explains department training in relevant areas including de-escalation, mental health awareness, bias, stress management, and tactical communication—and the department's full list of policies. KCPD also used its Media Unit as the central repository for feedback regarding the protest response and to coordinate messaging. KCPD public information officers (PIOs) also responded to protest areas to create designated media staging areas and provided hourly updates to the media. At the same time as PIOs were on scene, other KCPD public relations staff posted similar information on social media remotely, and a public relations specialist went to the city's Emergency Operations Center to monitor and post to social media. As the First Amendment assemblies and protests evolved, so too did the messaging from the KCPD Media Unit, and the unit and department continue to monitor the perceptions of the community and adapt their messages accordingly.

Source: Boyd, Sarah and Jake Becchina. (2020), March 3). "No More Rocks and Bottles: Lessons Learned in Crisis Communication." Police Chief Online.

<https://www.policechiefmagazine.org/no-more-rocks-and-bottles/>

Social Media for Information-Gathering

In addition to the benefits of leveraging social media to share information and updates, law enforcement and government officials can use social media platforms to observe—or listen to—social media posts and multimedia to gather additional situational awareness or intelligence from scenes of civil disturbances. Beginning on May 30, the LAPD Major Crimes Division began monitoring open source information to provide situational awareness of similar projected planned and unplanned gatherings that may devolve into looting and riots.¹⁹⁹ Each day, relevant information about potential local events—including flyers posted on social media, tweets of locations to meet, and posts of march route—and similar First Amendment assemblies and protests in other cities was shared with the appropriate bureau command posts. Where possible, additional information that could be gleaned from the social media posts was also included.²⁰⁰ By that point, the veracity and fluidity of the protests had diminished significantly and many of the posts did not account for the looting and rioting that occurred each night.



¹⁹⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, May 30). Contact Information for MCD ICC. Provided to the NPF team by LAPD electronically on March 19, 2021.

²⁰⁰ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). ICC Updates Multimedia. Provided to the NPF team by LAPD electronically on November 10, 2020.

Using Social Media During Critical Incidents

During the 2011 Stanley Cup finals, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) used a social media dashboard to create streams and searches that could be followed to respond to questions being asked by people who had gathered outside of the arena in Vancouver to watch the games being played in Boston and to gain situational awareness. As riots ensued in Vancouver, the ability to observe the social media posts being generated was useful in determining how to respond. In addition, the department could see hundreds of supportive tweets and emails, which they ultimately used to help generate tips and identifications of some of the rioters and looters.

Likewise, public information officers at the University of North Carolina–Charlotte, Orlando Police Department, and San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department all reported that monitoring social media during and immediately following an incident was a major lesson learned from their experiences responding to mass violence incidents. Although different scenarios, monitoring social media can ensure that false narratives and information are identified, dispelled, and countered with factual information quickly. Additionally, social media can be used to gain situational awareness about spontaneous gatherings or group movements that may require a public safety response. These tasks can be assigned internally to personnel with appropriate technical skills to conduct social media analysis and intelligence gathering or potentially delegated out to mutual aid agencies with similar expertise.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014, August). Crisis Emergency Risk Communication. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cerc_2014edition.pdf

Chapter Three Findings and Recommendations

Finding 3.1: Although a virtual JIC was established, the review process impacted the ability of LAPD to post timely messages to its social media accounts.

Recommendation 3.1.1: The City of Los Angeles should establish a unified narrative and public messaging strategy around first amendment assemblies (before, during, and after) that informs the public about City leadership’s position on supporting free speech during First Amendment assemblies, but clearly defines consequences for those responsible for committing violence or destruction during such assemblies.

Recommendation 3.1.2: The City of LA and LAPD should develop policies and procedures that use social media to “push” information to the community and quickly disseminate accurate information in response to rumors, misinformation, and false accusations.

Finding 3.2: The LAPD decision to not fully leverage social media to share information and respond to false accusations allowed demonstrators to control the narrative and overwhelm LAPD on the information front.

Recommendation 3.2.1: LAPD should create a clear and detailed media strategy to guide the department’s use of traditional news media and social media, particularly during critical incidents.

Recommendation 3.2.2: LAPD should consider leveraging new and emerging technologies including reverse-text alert systems—and continue leveraging social media—to disseminate dispersal warnings and curfew notices.

Chapter Four: Officer Wellness and Morale

As the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) move forward from the public protests that followed the death of George Floyd, the LAPD and police departments across the country must define a new “normal” for policing. In doing so, the LAPD should acknowledge the grief and pain experienced by individual officers assigned to the First Amendment assemblies and protests, their families, the department, and the community. With the focus on reform and moving forward, the City and the LAPD should take the time to acknowledge individual, group trauma and community trauma.

To implement and sustain the changes the community is demanding, the City of LA and the LAPD must address community trauma as well as the trauma experienced by its members. Unresolved trauma becomes the mechanism by which “history repeats itself.”²⁰¹

Policing Civil Unrest and Trauma during COVID-19

Perhaps the most unique feature of police work is the experience of critical incidents, which are distinguished from more common routine emergencies (that can also be very severe) by significant elements of novelty. The novelty may result from threats that have never been encountered before; from a more familiar event occurring at an unprecedented level; or from a confluence of forces, which, although not new, in combination pose unique challenges.²⁰²

In Los Angeles, the First Amendment assemblies and protests that followed the death of George Floyd were marked by novelty—intense levels of violence, divisive politics, multiple voices amongst the protesters, and calls for defunding or eliminating the LAPD. Even more troubling, and unique to the current wave of civil unrest, have been the tactics employed by extremists and violent actors targeting law enforcement. These tactics have included physical targeting of officers, patrol vehicles, personal residences, and property, as well as virtual targeting through posting personal information online and cyber threats.²⁰³

The challenges of policing First Amendment assemblies and protests, have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic—which, in itself, is an ongoing pervasive stressor and traumatic event. LAPD officers have continued to work and respond to calls for service increasing the risk of exposure and concerns that their family members could be exposed to the virus. Social distancing policies have resulted in numerous changes and alterations in protocols including requirements to wear personal protective equipment (PPE), altered patrol routines, changed shift schedules, and work hours. In some cases, the protests in LA have led to outbreaks or rapid escalation of COVID-19 infections in the LAPD.

²⁰¹ Fromm, M. Gerard (ed). (2012). *Lost in Transmission: Studies of Trauma Across Generations*. New York: Routledge. p. 183.

²⁰² Howitt, Arnold M. and Herman B. Leonard. (2009). *Managing Crises: Responses to Large-Scale Emergencies*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. pgs. 5-6.

²⁰³ See footnote 115.

Outcomes of Trauma

Heightened exposure to threat and trauma places first responders at increased risk for a wide range of negative outcomes, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).²⁰⁴ For example, following the September 11th terrorist attack, the prevalence of PTSD ranged from 6.3% to 22% in firefighters, from 6.5% to 14.1% in EMT's, and from 2.5% to 9.8% in police officers.²⁰⁵ While many LAPD officers experience symptoms and behavior problems that fall short of full diagnostic criteria for PTSD, they may have subthreshold PTSD along with many debilitating symptoms. Such post-trauma adjustment problems include (but are not limited to) acute stress reactions, domestic and other forms of violence, depression, suicidal ideation, and death by suicide.²⁰⁶

A study regarding the effects of the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest among members of the Los Angeles Police Department found that of the 141 police officers who participated in the research, 17% of the officers were experiencing stress symptomatology. Findings further indicated that the officers were twice as likely to use avoidance coping strategies than their counterparts without symptomatology. Furthermore, the officers used a broader variety of coping strategies than their counterparts. Overall, the results indicated the presence of PTSD symptomatology among the police officers assigned to the riot areas in Los Angeles. The majority of the police officers either directly or indirectly expressed difficulty performing the job because of associated stressful conditions.²⁰⁷

In a study of police officers assigned to the VI Reparto Mobile, an Italian specialized police unit exclusively deployed for riot and crowd control during the 2001 G8-Summit in Genoa, the research team found that although the officers had a good capability to withstand operational stress and to keep balance, a considerable number of officers suffered from excessive levels of stress due to a disparity between work demands and control capability, as well as disparity between effort and reward. Some officers suffered from excessive levels of stress leading to higher short-term absence.²⁰⁸

A study of the mental health effects for law enforcement and community members exposed to violence during the Ferguson protests found that 14.3% of law enforcement officers exceeded the clinical cutoffs for a likely PTSD diagnosis. The researchers opined that the high incidence of law enforcement personnel exceeding the PTSD cutoff and the depression cutoff (32.6%) as well as high rates of clinically significant anger (22.7%) had implications for healing in a similarly traumatized community—“It is difficult to imagine how a community can heal, live, and work together harmoniously when one out of four members (in both community and police) is suffering from PTSD symptoms and/or clinically elevated levels of anger and one out of three is suffering from clinical levels of depression.”²⁰⁹

An area that has received minimal research attention is the impact of the socio-political environment on the level of stress experienced by police officers. Police officers indicated that socio-political stress was attributed to the following: (a) national news makes it appear that all communities distrust their local departments, despite the fact that their departments maintained good relationships with the communities they serve;

²⁰⁴ Violanti, J. M., Charles, L. E., McCanlies, E., Hartley, T. A., Baughman, P., Andrew, M. E., Fekedulegn, D., Ma, C. C., Mnatsakanova, A., & Burchfiel, C. M. (2017). Police stressors and health: a state-of-the-art review. *Policing (Bradford, England)*, 40(4), 642–656. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-06-2016-0097>

²⁰⁵ Wilson, L.C. (2015). “A systematic review of probable post-traumatic stress disorder in first responders following man-made mass violence.” *Psychiatry Research*.

²⁰⁶ Arble, Eamonn Patrick and Arntez, Bengt B. (2020). “Evidence-Based Practices to Enhance First Responder Well-Being and Performance” in Bowers, Clint A.; Deborah C. Beidel and Madeline R. Marks (2020). *Mental Health Intervention and Treatment of First Responders and Emergency Workers*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global, p. 206.

²⁰⁷ Harvey-Lintz, Terri and Romeria Tidwell. (1997). “Effects of the 1992 Los Angeles Civil Unrest: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Symptomatology among Law Enforcement Officers.” *The Social Science Journal*, Volume 34, Number 2, pgs. 171-183.

²⁰⁸ Garbarino, S.; N. Magnavita; C. Chiorri; D. Brisinda; G. Cuomo; A. Venuti; and, R. Fenici, (2012, May 12). “Evaluation of Operational Stress in Riot and Crowd Control Police Units: A Global Challenge for Prevention and Management of Police Task-Related Stress.” *Journal of Police Criminal Psychology*.

²⁰⁹ Galovski, Tara E., Zoe D. Peterson, Marin C. Beagley, David R. Stasshofer, Philip Held, and Thomas D. Fletcher. (2016, August). “Exposure to Violence During Ferguson Protests: Mental Health Effects for Law Enforcement and Community Members.” *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 29, 283-292. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/>

(b) “over scrutiny” by the media set up impossibly high standards, leading officers to second guess their enforcement actions—causing hesitation and reluctance to follow use of force guidelines that may expose them to injury; (c) the 24-hour news cycle and cable news channels exacerbate the negative perception of officers leading them to feel defensive and unappreciated; and, (d) community members recording interactions and sharing them creates a heightened stressful atmosphere causing officers to be concerned about how they will appear on film that can be edited unfavorably.²¹⁰ Additionally, social media provides a troubling opportunity for persons to post unverified, hateful, and derogatory messaging in a growing milieu of chat rooms, search engines, and other venues that can be damaging to individual officers and their departments in both the short- and long-term.

Impact of Traumatized Officers

Although police officers are generally thought to be more resilient and are exposed to threatening and potentially traumatic events at a higher frequency than other professions, police officers who maintain negative or traumatic information in long-term memory are vulnerable to mental illness, unstable emotional and behavioral responses, interpersonal problems, and impaired social relationships.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), many police officers struggle with alcohol abuse, depression, suicidal thoughts, posttraumatic stress disorder and other challenges over the course of their careers. Here are some concerning facts from NAMI’s website:

- **The suicide rate for police officers is four times higher than the rate for firefighters.**
- **In the smallest departments, the suicide rate for officers increases to almost four times the national average.**
- **More police officers die by suicide than in the line of duty. In 2017, there were an estimated 140 law enforcement suicides.**
- **Compared to the general population, law enforcement reports much higher rates of depression, PTSD, burnout and other anxiety related mental health conditions.**²¹¹

According to Blue H.E.L.P.,²¹² a non-profit organization that tracks police officer suicide data, at least 228 police officers died by suicide in 2019. In the aftermath of the Capitol attack, two police officers, one a Capitol Police officer and the other a Metropolitan Police Department officer, took their own lives.²¹³ Researchers have found that police officers tend to either not seek mental health treatment, try to fix their own mental health problem, or will not be forthcoming in treatment regarding internalized thoughts of psychological distress.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Saunders, Jessica, Virginia Kotzias, and Rajeev Ramchand. (2018, December 12). “Contemporary Police Stress: The Impact of the Evolving Socio-Political Context.” *Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society*. <https://scholasticahq.com/criminology-criminal-justice-law-society/>

²¹¹ National Alliance on Mental Illness. <https://nami.org/>

²¹² Shannon, Joel. (2020, January 2). “At least 228 police officers died by suicide in 2019, Blue H.E.L.P. says. That’s more than were killed in the line of duty.” *USA Today*. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/01/02/blue-help-228-police-suicides-2019-highest-total/2799876001/>

²¹³ Emma, Caitlin and Sarah Ferris. (2021, January 27). “Second police officer died by suicide following Capitol attack.” *Politico*. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/01/27/second-officer-suicide-following-capitol-riot-463123>

²¹⁴ Mahbubani, Rhea and Kelly McLaughlin. (2020, June 14). “Police officers stigmatize seeking help for mental-health issues. It could be damaging for the communities they’re supposed to serve and protect.” *Insider*. <https://www.insider.com/police-officers-stress-mental-health-stigma-impacting-public-2020-6>

The LAPD Response to Employee Health and Wellness

Fifty-two years ago, the LAPD established Behavioral Science Services (BSS) which is responsible for planning, developing, implementing and administering the Department's psychological services program. BSS, originally staffed by one psychologist has grown to 15-full-time professional and trained psychologists who specialize in law enforcement-related situations and crises.

Psychologists are assigned to one or more of LAPD's divisions, and pre-COVID 19, attended roll calls, participated in ride-a-longs, and provided training and health education. Since COVID-19, psychological services are provided via telehealth, with limited in-person visits. Telehealth has increased participation overall, by reducing the need for personnel to commute downtown for services and increasing anonymity. Services are provided at no cost and there is no cap on the length of participation for employees or their significant other.

BSS provides individual and couples counseling to all Department personnel and their spouses. In addition to counseling, BSS psychologists also provide training for Department personnel on topics such as stress management, suicide prevention, and anger management. BSS conducts debriefings and defusings for Department personnel involved in traumatic incidents. Additionally, a psychologist responds with the Special Weapons and Tactics Team to assist in hostage negotiation and barricaded subject situations.²¹⁵

LAPD personnel are connected to BSS psychologists through self-referrals, as a result of their involvement in a critical incident (e.g. an officer involved shooting) or a direct referral by a supervisor for an assignment most often related to a workplace conflict or suicidal ideology.

BSS supports the efforts of the Department's 320-person peer support team, which was established in 1986, and is composed of members from all ranks and assignments. Approximately 75% of the peer support team are drawn from the sworn ranks and 25% from civilian personnel, primarily 911 operators. There are five specialized cadres within the peer support program—officer-involved shooting, caregivers, retirees, substance abuse, and veteran-to-veteran.

The BSS works closely with the LAPD Wives Association providing counseling, education and support to the wives of LAPD officers. Additionally, BSS assists other support groups within the department.

In addition to BSS, the League entered into a contract with the Holman Group to provide counseling services to officers who seek assistance outside of BSS. Officers, their significant other and children can participate in up to ten (10) free sessions and additional sessions at a reduced rate. The service is paid through officer membership dues.

During the protests, BSS provided services to officers through telehealth and saw a significant increases in self-referrals (approximately 50%).²¹⁶ In the aftermath of the protests, psychologists attended roll calls and meetings and asked attendees to share thoughts and feelings regarding the protests, City and department leadership,

²¹⁵ Los Angeles Police Department. (2021). Behavioral Science Services. https://www.lapdonline.org/inside_the_lapd/content_basic_view/6497

²¹⁶ NPF assessment team interview with LAPD BSS employee. March 8, 2021

²¹⁷ Los Angeles Police Department. (2020, June 19). "Heard From the Field Post-2020 Protests." Submitted by BSS to the LAPD Chief of Police. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on March 8, 2021.

community perception, individual physical and mental health, and the future of policing in LA. The statements were summarized in “Heard from the Field Post-2020 Protests,” a document prepared by Behavioral Science Services and submitted to the Chief of Police.²¹⁷

“Heard from the Field,” documents the level of trauma, exhaustion, isolation, disappointment, anger, hopelessness and frustration experienced by LAPD personnel regarding their assignments during the protests, and regarding community perception, political and department leadership. Similar observations were made by the LAPD Wives Association during interviews conducted by the National Police Foundation (NPF) assessment team and in a survey taken by the Los Angeles Police Protective League and published in the Thin Blue Line (2020).²¹⁸ The “Heard from the Field” document provided nine (9) recommendations to the Chief and the Department’s command staff on “immediate response options” and nine (9) recommendations regarding opportunities to “tap into and rebuild the resiliency of the workforce.”



²¹⁸ Los Angeles Police Protective League. (2020, November). “Your Voice Matters.” Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPPL electronically on February 3, 2021.

Chapter Four Findings and Recommendations

Finding 4.1: For more than 50 years, LAPD has endeavored to assist its personnel through Behavioral Science Services and aligned groups. In many ways, LAPD should be recognized for its innovative programs and leadership in the law enforcement profession regarding physical and mental wellness.

Finding 4.2: The research is clear that law enforcement personnel are exposed to significant traumatic events during the course of their careers. This exposure increases the likelihood of negative physical and mental health impacts that extend beyond an officer's law enforcement career.

Recommendation 4.2.1: LAPD should continue to support the capacity of Behavioral Science Services, the Peer Support Team, and other aligned groups to assist Department personnel and their families address trauma, build resiliency and support physical and mental health.

Finding 4.3: LAPD, elected officials and the LA community should recognize that research indicates that crowd management and other critical incidents have a significant negative impact on law enforcement personnel, their significant others, and children. This not only impacts officers' ability to positively engage with the community, a cornerstone of community policing, but also contributes to the cycle of community trauma.

Recommendation 4.3.1: LAPD should consider deploying BSS psychologists to the DOC, and COVID-19 permitting, to divisions to conduct defusings and debriefings during extended crowd management periods as well as continue employee and family outreach and engagement activities to mitigate trauma and to connect officers to services in real time. This and other wellness resources for officers on extended deployment should be coordinated by a Mental Health Incident Commander that reports to the Safety Officer within the Incident Command Structure. The MHIC should manage all mental health-related tasks, especially during First Amendment assemblies and protests, while the Safety Officer focuses on traditional components of physical safety.

Finding 4.4: COVID-19, the deaths of nine members of the Department, deaths and serious illness among loved ones, and the fear of infecting family members placed untold stress on the LAPD, and exacerbated the stress and trauma associated with crowd management during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 4.4.1: Recognizing the impact of COVID-19; extended shifts and cancelled days; violence directed at officers; threats to their families; highly charged rhetoric; and loss of public trust and confidence—LAPD leadership, in particular, as well as elected officials and the LA community should recognize the importance of supporting officers and their families during this challenging period.

Finding 4.5: Officer morale has been described almost universally as ‘at an all-time low’. In addition to being the “target” of the protests, frustration with LAPD leadership and inconsistent messaging, and statements and decisions made by elected officials during and after the protests have been perceived as a lack of support for the department. There were significant resignations and retirements in 2020 and early 2021, with some of the individuals citing the combination of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, the COVID-19 pandemic, and anti-police rhetoric as their reasons.

In May 2015, the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) observed:



The wellness and safety of law enforcement officers is critical not only to themselves, their colleagues, and their agencies but also to public safety. An officer whose capabilities, judgement, and behaviors are adversely affected by poor physical or psychological health not only may be of little use to the community he or she serves but also may be a danger to the community and to other officers.”²¹⁹

Hurt people can hurt people.”²²⁰

As the City of Los Angeles, elected officials, and the LAPD work to reimagine policing, strengthen the Department’s community policing programs, and repair fractured community relations, there must be collective action and a concerted effort to address trauma in the Department and the community it serves.

²¹⁹ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. 2015. Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf

²²⁰ Ibid.

Chapter Five: Community Engagement and Perspective

The City of Los Angeles (LA) is comprised of a demographically and socioeconomically diverse composition of persons. According to US Census estimates, there are almost 4 million people in the City of Los Angeles: approximately 52.1% “White alone,” 48.5% “Hispanic or Latino,” 28.5% “White alone, not Hispanic or Latino,” 11.6% “Asian alone,” 8.9% “Black or African American alone,” 3.8% “Two or More Races,” 0.7% “American Indian and Alaska Native alone,” and 0.2% “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone.”²²¹ This mix of cultures and people makes LA a vibrant and diverse city, and it provides a diverse mix of perspectives regarding the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Public Safety in Communities of Color

For many people who live in socially and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, poverty, a lack of opportunity, disrupted families, violence, and feelings of hopelessness define the narrative of everyday life.²²²

Over the past 40 years, some police departments, challenged by surges in violent crime and calls for quick and decisive actions by the public and elected officials, relied on aggressive enforcement narratives and strategies to fight the “wars” on crime and drugs. The strong emphasis on fighting crime and the dramatic increases in incarceration tore a hole in the social fabric of many neighborhoods. Communities of color in particular, suffered from aggressive and indiscriminate tactics that failed to bring peace and stability to neighborhoods. Although the tactics were intended to reduce crime and keep residents safe, their use disenfranchised many of the residents they were meant to protect. Those residents viewed the tactics as intrusive, oppressive, misguided, and race-based. Amongst many community members, particularly in those neighborhoods that needed police services the most, the heavy-handed tactics have reduced police credibility and legitimacy.²²³

Wesley Lowery, author of “They Can’t Kill Us All” wrote:



In hundreds of interviews, residents of the North Country [Ferguson] suburbs told me heartbreaking stories of arbitrary traffic stops and aggressive street stops and pat downs, emergency calls ignored by the police, and the enduring perception that the deaths of black and brown men are neither fully investigated nor solved – especially at the hands of police officers.”²²⁴

In 2017, former Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Chief Charlie Beck echoed these concerns in an opinion piece that appeared in the Los Angeles Times: “unfortunately, when we declare war, several things happen. We cause collateral damage, which erodes whatever moral high ground led to the declaration.

²²¹ US Census Bureau. (2021). “Quick Facts: Los Angeles city, California”

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/losangelescitycalifornia,losangelescountycalifornia,CA/PST045219#qf-headnote-a>

²²² Straub, Frank. (2021). “Rewriting the Narrative: A Path Forward for Policing.” In: Dangerous Narratives: Warfare, Strategy, Statecraft. Maan, Ajit (ed) Washington, D.C.: Narrative Strategies Ink, p.138-139.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Lowery, Wesley. (2016). They Can’t Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America’s Racial Justice Movement. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

Our ‘opponents’—now unified—possess their own moral mandate for counterattacks. This is what we [LAPD] did when we declared war on our own communities during the 1980s and 1990s.”

The “war narratives” that were advanced during the past forty years have proven remarkably durable. In fact, few observers of American policing would disagree with the statement that police-minority relations remain stressed, nor would they disagree that they represent the embers that burned just below the surface in LA and many American communities that accelerated protests following the death of George Floyd.

LAPD Relationships with the Community

The relationship between the LAPD and the LA community has substantially improved because of the work of LAPD leadership who have sought to change the “warrior” culture, in which many officers saw themselves as soldiers and minority communities as war zones.²²⁶ In its place, these chiefs morphed the culture to one that prioritized a community policing approach that focused on fostering and maintaining positive relationships with community members and local business owners, assigning the same officers to the same communities, and working collaboratively with Community-Police Advisory Boards (CPABs) and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to address hyperlocal issues. Many of the community members interviewed by the NPF assessment team discussed their relationships with LAPD in a positive way, describing efforts to engage with the community through programs like the Senior Lead Officer Program as helpful, and in some cases, “a lifeline.”²²⁷

In conjunction with changing the culture, LAPD also recognized the importance of enhancing diversity and increasing transparency to improving police-community relations. During the 1992 civil unrest, more than 60% of the department was White; however, today LAPD is significantly more diverse and is only approximately 30% White.²²⁸ Additionally, LAPD

emphasized developing and promoting an array of internal personnel, resulting in a command staff that is demographically diverse and predominately from the southern California region.

LAPD has focused on improving relationships with the community by enhancing transparency. LAPD posts its entire Department Manual, news updates and press releases, and reports from during and after its consent decree on its website. LAPD was also one of the first large agencies to deploy body-worn cameras and use the footage from these cameras as part of the Critical Incident Community Briefing videos that provide context and preliminary investigation findings around specific use of force incidents.²²⁹ LAPD also posts details and summaries of certain use of force and all officer-involved-shooting cases on its website.²³⁰

This commitment to culture, diversity, and transparency has led some in the community, while skeptical of the LAPD, to meet and work with “good officers”—ones they identify as having helped make their communities safer. Some community members—particularly those in high-crime neighborhoods—even indicated that they would like to see more police in their neighborhoods, more foot patrols, more presence, and generally more engagement by

²²⁶ (2017, April 28). “Twenty five years later, how did the riots transform L.A.? And has the city changed enough.” Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/la-oe-los-angeles-riots-voices-updates-20170427-htmlstory.html>.

²²⁸ Lovett, I. (2020). 1992 Los Angeles Riots: How the George Floyd Protests Are Different. The Wall Street Journal. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-george-floyd-protests-in-los-angeles-differ-from-1992-riots-11591263005>

²²⁷ NPF assessment team interview with business representative. January 22, 2021.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ See footnote 197.

the LAPD.²³¹ These community members, while supportive of movements that call for police accountability and reduction in uses of force, also believe that the police are necessary to keeping the city safe.

Nonetheless, some community members talked about longstanding racial tension between the LAPD and segments of the community, particularly people of color. These community members described years of police misconduct, particularly against diverse communities, and suggested that these issues continue today and fear that the LAPD is reverting back to heavy-handed methods.²³²

Regardless of the views expressed, the overwhelming majority of community members the NPF assessment team talked to and heard comments from discussed the fact that they want equitable and fair policing from LAPD, abhor police misconduct, and do not want to see it tolerated—in LA or elsewhere.²³⁴ At the same time, they do not want violence and destruction in their city, but want to see their city thrive and believe the police are necessary to keep it safe.²³³

Relationships During the SAFE LA First Amendment Assemblies and Protests

Some community members though, detailed accounts of police aggression during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, including using “chemicals” and rubber bullets, hitting protesters with batons, and ‘kettling’—encircling and confining large groups of protesters, without distinguishing between those who were peaceful and those who were inciting violence, to effect mass arrests as a method of crowd control.²³⁵ Some community members voiced concern that the recent trend of LAPD responses to First Amendment assemblies and protests—dating back to the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles in 2000 and a subsequent demonstration on October 22, 2000—demonstrate a “pattern of constitutional violations and threatened future actions.”²³⁶ Other community members

made allegations of racism within LAPD, even highlighting articles about gangs within LA law enforcement.²³⁷

During the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, LAPD was able to leverage some community relationships to assist in communication, monitoring, and providing a visible security presence. During interviews with the NPF assessment team, BID representatives reported seeing a heavy LAPD presence in the downtown area, were included in some of the bureau command posts, and appreciated the ongoing direct contact with district commanders. CPAB members interviewed by the NPF assessment team also referenced the positive interactions with the LAPD and noted

²³¹ NPF assessment team interview with community member. February 5, 2021.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ NPF assessment team Community Listening session. February 4, 2021.

²³⁴ NPF assessment team interview with community member. January 21, 2021.

²³⁵ NPF assessment team Community Listening session. February 4, 2021. By policy, LAPD does not deploy projectile chemical munitions, but officers are issued individual OC spray canisters.

²³⁶ National Lawyers Guild. (2020, June 21). First Amended Complaint: Class Action; Injunctive Relief and Damages. US District Court Central District of California—Western Division. <https://nlg-la.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/06/AMENDED-COMPLAINT-ECF.pdf>

²³⁷ NPF assessment team interview with community member. February 2, 2021. Community member followed up with an email to NPF assessment team on February 6, 2021 including links to the following articles: CBSLA Staff. (2021, January 13). “LA Sheriff’s Department Has Several Secret Deputy Gangs, Report Finds.” CBS Los Angeles. <https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2021/01/13/la-sheriffs-department-has-several-secret-deputy-gangs-report-finds/> and Rector, Kevin. (2021, February 13). “LAPD investigating report of George Floyd photo circulating with caption ‘You take my breath away’.” Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-02-13/lapd-employee-posts-photo-of-george-floyd-with-caption-you-take-my-breath-away>

that district commanders and captains regularly reached out to provide community and business representatives with information to help them prepare for possible activities in their areas. BID and CPAB representatives said that their LAPD personnel respond every time they called and “did the best that they could” given the chaotic and fluid situations. These representatives also acknowledged the violence being directed at LAPD officers that worked the line and described officers being yelled at and having items thrown at them. These community members believed that oftentimes, aggressive tactics used by LAPD were in reaction to aggressive tactics used by protesters trying to incite a violent response.

At the same time, BID representatives perceived that while the department is generally proactive in

responding to crime and safety issues particularly in the downtown area, they LAPD did not do enough to stop the looting and destruction of local businesses during some of the events. The BID representative also suggested that LAPD is “afraid to mess up—due to pressure generally around policing and in particular around enforcement action of the homeless in LA—so instead they do nothing to intervene in crime, even crimes in progress.”²³⁸ The sentiment that LAPD was hesitant to take actions that could be misperceived as heavy-handed or violent was echoed by other BID representatives and community members along with the perception that the message that ended up being sent was that crime will be tolerated in the city and LAPD will do nothing.²³⁹

Constructive Conversation Team (CCT) Training

In 2016, following demonstrations instigated by an officer-involved shooting in Charlotte, North Carolina, community members and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) collaborated to develop the Constructive Conversation Team (CCT) training. CCT training combines classroom instruction and scenario-based exercises and focuses on enhancing interactions between CMPD personnel and community members. Scenarios include bringing in members of the Charlotte advocacy community to engage in the same behaviors they are likely to use during a First Amendment assembly or protest and CMPD trainees are required to de-escalate the situation using only communication. The program has been so successful that some media reports in the Charlotte area highlighted the positives during the First Amendment assemblies and protests following the death of George Floyd.

Source: Hicks, Caroline. (2020, June 1). “A look at CMPD policing from 2016 to 2020 protests.” WBTV. <https://www.wbvtv.com/2020/06/01/look-cmpd-policing-protests/>

²³⁸ NPF assessment team interview with business representative. January 25, 2021.

²³⁹ Ibid.

Chapter Five: Findings and Recommendations

Finding 5.1: LAPD has a history of professional policing, positive engagement, and strong relationships with business owners and Business Improvement District (BID) organizations, faith- and community-based institutions and organizations, and the Los Angeles community, including activists. They were able to leverage those relationships during responses to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 5.1.1: LAPD should continue to identify opportunities to engage community members—particularly those community members and leaders likely to organize and participate in First Amendment assemblies and mass demonstrations—in the preparation and training process.²⁴⁰

Recommendation 5.1.2: LAPD should continue to invest in community policing efforts including engaging one-on-one or in small groups to build relations and obtain feedback from communities in each bureau. Community members interviewed told the NPF assessment team that the Community-Police Advisory Boards (C-PABs) and BID meetings are important opportunities for them to meet and engage with their local police officers and supervisors, as well as identify and discuss local issues, concerns, and strategies. Particularly around the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, these meetings were helpful in sharing information about potential demonstrations and routes.

Recommendation 5.1.3: LAPD should continue to engage C-PABs, BID meetings, and other community engagement opportunities to provide the community a voice and meaningful involvement in how its police department operates—including strategic hiring and promotions, training, policy development, and other activities to improve community-police relations.

Finding 5.2: Despite ongoing efforts to improve relationships, the history of LAPD is also punctuated with tensions between the community and the department (as well as narratives highlighting tensions between various communities and the police around the nation). These tensions and narratives continue to inform perceptions of the police in Los Angeles.

Recommendation 5.2.1: LAPD training programs on community-police interactions, implicit bias, and building and maintaining trust should continue and build on lessons learned during recent First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 5.2.2: Each LAPD bureau should continue to identify opportunities to engage community members—particularly those community members and leaders likely to organize and participate in First Amendment assemblies and protests in their area—in the preparation and training process. These opportunities have helped officers and community members in other jurisdictions develop mutual understanding and conduct full-scale training exercises with those likely to demonstrate.

²⁴⁰ See footnote 115.

Conclusion: Moving Forward

Traumatic events are defined as a single incident or series of incidents that cause high levels of stress and are marked by a sense of horror, serious injury, or the threat of serious injury and affect survivors, first responders, and friends and relatives of those who were involved.²⁴¹ Accounts from Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) personnel at all levels, City of Los Angeles (LA) elected officials, and community and business representatives of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred between May 27 and June 7, 2020 expressed these elements.

LAPD has worked hard to build and maintain relationships with all segments of the Los Angeles community and personnel at all ranks continue to work to ease tensions, rebuild and repair relationships, and identify opportunities to enhance transparency and accountability. This work should continue. Likewise, community members must continue to be empowered through Community-Police Advisory Boards, Business Improvement Districts, and other formal and informal opportunities to develop and implement meaningful opportunities to work collaboratively with LAPD and elected officials toward public safety. It is also incumbent upon elected officials to facilitate meaningful opportunities to host and facilitate open, honest, and productive conversations to work toward understanding and addressing issues and to support LAPD and the community as they come together and implement some of the recommendations provided in this AAR.

The City of LA and the LAPD's commitment to the continual advancement of fair and just policing should continue. During peaceful SAFE LA protests and demonstrations, strong and motivated partnerships between law enforcement, community members, and elected officials were instrumental in ensuring that violence, destruction and chaos did not occur in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd.

No individual stakeholder has the ability to solve all the past and present challenges around racial justice and policing in LA or elsewhere. However, the participation of representatives from all parties in this exemplifies their commitment to wanting to ensure the City remains the "Creative Capital of the World," by creating a city-wide strategy that balances First Amendment assemblies and protests with community safety.²⁴²



²⁴¹ US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coping with a Traumatic Event. <https://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping.pdf>

²⁴² Nusca, Andrew. (2009, November 19). "Is Los Angeles really the creative capital of the world? Report says yes." ZDNet. <https://www.zdnet.com/article/is-los-angeles-really-the-creative-capital-of-the-world-report-says-yes/>

Appendix A: All Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1.1: Following the violent Rodney King protests in South LA in 1992, the LAPD made significant changes to their protocols in response to civil unrest, setting a national model for law enforcement policy and training.

Finding 1.2: LAPD, like many police departments across the country had well-developed crowd management policies and practices that had proven successful during previous events. Those policies and practices were inadequate to handle the disparate groups, or to identify leaders amongst the protesters and address the level of violence.

Recommendation 1.2.1: LAPD should synthesize the relevant provisions spread throughout the current Department and clearly establish guidelines for the coordination, facilitation, and management of First Amendment assemblies and protests. This single provision should include relevant components of responding to planned and spontaneous events, managing such events, identifying and quickly obtaining additional staffing and resources, determining and declaring an unlawful assembly, crowd management and control, public information and communications, and use of force and less lethal documentation. Other large agencies, including the San Diego Police Department, have recently published similar synthesized policies.²⁴³

Recommendation 1.2.2: LAPD should review national and international best practices regarding the impact of police actions on First Amendment assembly and protest participants.²⁴⁴

Recommendation 1.2.3: LAPD should consider developing special unit(s) to establish contact with activists and demonstrators before, during, and after protests. As a consequence of the failure of the police to control riots during the EU Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden (2001), the police developed a new special tactic for crowd management. The aim of the tactic is to achieve de-escalation. “Dialogue officers” were trained and deployed to establish contact with demonstrators before, during and after protests and to link the organizers of the events and police commanders. Similar units have been developed and deployed in response to civil unrest in England.²⁴⁵ Similar units were deployed in Portland during protests and counter-protests in 2019. Following the 2016, civil unrest in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department and community created the Community Conversation Team to deescalate and engage protesters.

²⁴³ San Diego Police Department. (2021, February 17). First Amendment Activity Facilitation and Management. <https://ca-times.brightspotcdn.com/04/ac/754ed3ba44529a8b7b9cf47368a8/sdpd-protest-policy.pdf>

²⁴⁴ Policing Project at NYU School of Law. (2020, October). Policing Protests to Protect Constitutional Rights and Public Safety. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58a33e881b631bc60d4f8b31/t/5f9af5fe6b0e0f0c265ffdb8/1603991043508/POLICING+PROTESTS+TO+PROTECT+CONSTITUTIONAL+RIGHTS+AND+PUBLIC+SAFETY+10-29.pdf>

²⁴⁵ Holgersson, S. and Knutsson, J., (2011). Dialogue policing – a means for less crowd violence? *Crime Prevention Studies*, 26, 191-216. Gorringer, Hugo, Clifford Scott, and Michael Rosie. (2012). Dialogue Police, Decision Making, and the Management of Public Order During Protest Crowd Events. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*. 9.10.1002/jip.1359. Waddington, D. (2017). Police Liaison Approaches to Managing Political Protest: A Critical Analysis of a Prominent UK Example. In: Bayer, P., Karlovic, R., Akhgar, B., Marakaria, G. (eds) *Community Policing – A European Perspective*. Advanced Sciences and Technologies for Security Applications. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53396-4_7

Finding 1.3: Although it aligned with LAPD’s use of force provisions and procedures, documentation of uses of force during protests and demonstrations—including the deployment of less lethal munitions—was inconsistent by LAPD members.

Recommendation 1.3.1: LAPD should establish a clear policy, process, and documentation requirement for requesting and receiving less lethal munitions, particularly during the response to First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Senior level command staff and first-line supervisors made similar observations to the NPF assessment team that nobody was responsible for maintaining awareness of less lethal munitions.²⁴⁶ Multiple LAPD personnel relayed to the NPF assessment team that officers would “fill their trunks” with less lethal munitions without any documentation of where they were being used, in what scenarios, and who deployed them.²⁴⁷ This was exacerbated by breakdowns in command and communication but has a significant impact on transparency and accountability.

Finding 1.4: Some LAPD personnel had not been provided contemporary training on crowd management, mobile field force, supervision, de-escalation, or the use of less-lethal instruments prior to the First Amendment assemblies and demonstrations from May 27 through June 7, 2020. Many of the LAPD training bulletins, courses, and directives related to crowd management and control were outdated. For example, the Mobile Field Force Training Bulletin was last updated in August 2006²⁴⁸; the Use of Force – Tactics Directive on Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control was last updated in June 2011²⁴⁹; the Use of Force – Tactics Directive on Tactical De-Escalation Techniques was last updated in October 2016²⁵⁰; the Crowd Management and Control for Management was last updated in June 2007²⁵¹; and, the similar course for patrol was last updated in November 2012.²⁵²

Recommendation 1.4.1: LAPD should continue to serve as a national model for law enforcement by developing strategies, tactics, and Mobile Field Force teams to more effectively respond to these types of First Amendment assemblies and protests, which are becoming more frequent in the City and nationwide.

Finding 1.5: During the initial days of the protest, the number of disparate groups, the pace at which the protests accelerated, and the level of violence precluded the highly trained and experienced LAPD bike unit from successfully completing its mission. As the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests continued, the bike units were used to facilitate organized movements and rolling traffic stops.

²⁴⁶ NPF assessment team interviews with LAPD personnel. December 7, 2020 through March 3, 2021.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Los Angeles Police Department. “Training Bulletin: Mobile Field Force Concept – Part II Mobile Tactics.” August 2006. Provided to NPF assessment team electronically on August 31, 2020.

²⁴⁹ Los Angeles Police Department. “Los Angeles Police Department Use of Force – Tactics Directive No. 16 Tactical De-Escalation Techniques.” October 2016. Provided to NPF assessment team electronically on August 31, 2020.

²⁵⁰ See footnote 77.

²⁵¹ Los Angeles Police Department. (2007, June 15). “Los Angeles Police Department Crowd Management and Control for Management Expanded Course Outline.” Provided to NPF assessment team electronically on August 31, 2020.

²⁵² Ibid.

Finding 1.6: The National Guard was mobilized, responded to the City, and were used to protect critical infrastructure and major intersections and thoroughfares. The presence of the National Guard freed LAPD personnel for assignments related to crowd management and control.

Recommendation 1.6.1: Elected officials and LAPD leadership should weigh the risk and benefits of requesting National Guard assets sooner in future First Amendment assemblies and protests to support police operations, protect critical infrastructure, and provide a neutral presence.

Recommendation 1.6.2: The City should develop and widely distribute a well-coordinated message about the deployment of the National Guard, prior to, during and following their deployment in an effort to avoid them being seen as an occupying force. Messaging should include why the decision was made to request them, where they may be seen in the city, what their assignments may be and when they will be able to leave.

Finding 1.7: While LAPD has clear policies around use of force, crowd management, and other relevant pieces of responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests, they do not have one policy directing response specifically to large-scale, fluid, city-wide civil unrest that turns violent or contains violence.

Recommendation 1.7.1: LAPD should consider developing an overarching ‘response to fluid dynamic protests and civil unrest’ policy that provides for the nuances of this type of event, incorporates critical thinking skills and offers decision making models to guide at what points uses of force and relevant tools are permitted to be used by LAPD officers.²⁵³



²⁵³ See footnote 115.

Finding 2.1: The nature of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred in Los Angeles between May 27 and June 7, 2020 were ones that neither LAPD, nor other jurisdictions across the nation, have previously experienced nor expected. While LAPD has years of experience with responding to large First Amendment assemblies, mass demonstrations, and civil disturbances in the past—some of which have involved violence and destruction—the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests occurred during a unique and unprecedented time in the nation. Local and national political tensions, frustrations and uncertainty caused by COVID-19, and the continued national narrative decrying police, contributed to a visceral response by many demonstrators locally and nationwide—including some intent on violence.

Particularly in LA, the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests were unique in that multiple assemblies occurred at the same time in locations across the city (locations not previously impacted by civil disturbances). They involved both spontaneous and planned events, demonstrators used both social media and messaging applications and were planned and coordinated. Demonstrators used more advanced logistics and tactics to counteract known police response strategies, and they required more police and city resources than protests in the past. The simultaneous needs for specialized personnel and resources across the City to address these more contemporary tactics caused confusion and strained an LAPD system that was accustomed to responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests that occur at a single time and location. In some cases, people intent on causing violence and destruction took advantage of the spanned geographic space and time SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests to wreak havoc.

Recommendation 2.1.1: City and LAPD leaders should continue to build strong working relationships and prioritize planning, preparation, management, and training for First Amendment assembly and protest response. First Amendment assemblies and protests have occurred in Los Angeles since the Rodney King protests in 1992 and—given that LA is the second most populous city in the United States—will likely continue to take place. The LAPD and the City of Los Angeles should continue to review the totality of the 2020 protests and demonstrations and the impact on the city and the department in an effort learn from, plan and prepare for future incidents and to identify strategies and systems that worked in allowing freedom of expression while also protecting the public.

Recommendation 2.1.2: The City of Los Angeles and the LAPD should continue to review lessons learned from other large-scale First Amendment assemblies, mass demonstrations, and civil disturbances across the country and abroad to improve citywide and police department planning, preparedness, and response to similar events so as to incorporate best and promising practices. The City of Los Angeles and LAPD have been leaders in the field in responding to First Amendment assemblies and protests. However, when the peaceful assemblies devolved into chaotic and riotous events, LA and LAPD were not able to quickly adapt and respond. LA and LAPD should collect and analyze data available around civil disturbances, including damage incurred, injuries, use of force, arrest and impound, economic impact and other data collected during civil disturbances to identify systems, situations and variables that can assist in preventing and/or mitigating violence and destruction.

Recommendation 2.1.3: The LAPD should have commanders who were directly involved in responding to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests write an after-action report (AAR) that includes input from line level officers and up. These AARs—particularly the recommendations—should be synthesized and presented to the LAPD operations and training command staff.²⁵⁴ Where possible, promising practices and lessons learned should be incorporated into policy, training, and protocol.

Finding 2.2: The City of Los Angeles lacked a well-coordinated city-wide political, policy, communications, and law enforcement response mission to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred between May 27 and June 7, 2020. The City of Los Angeles' Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated and staffed prior to May 27, 2020, to coordinate the City's COVID-19 response. The EOC was under-utilized for decision-making and strategy implementation in response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 2.2.1: City officials, councilmembers, relevant City agencies, and LAPD leadership should ensure that a city-wide plan, consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), is used to manage First Amendment assemblies and protests, and that all City agencies understand, and participate in, the development and implementation of the plan. While the City of Los Angeles has used NIMS effectively to respond to natural disasters, the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests did not effectively leverage all components of NIMS—including establishing a single incident command system (ICS), fully utilizing the EOC, communicating and coordinating messaging through a Joint Information Center, and sharing information and resources across agencies. Planning and training for responses to pre-planned and spontaneous First Amendment assemblies and protests should include elected and appointed officials, law enforcement, other public safety agencies, other relevant government agencies, and relevant non-government and private sector organizations as appropriate.

Recommendation 2.2.2: The City of Los Angeles should establish one citywide incident management team (IMT)²⁵⁵ to lead its response to future large-scale First Amendment assemblies and incidents that involve a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction response. Beginning in 2009, LAPD established three internal IMTs—defined as, “a team of specialists familiar with all aspects of emergency management. They are experienced leaders, decision makers and strategic thinkers, self-actualized and willing to develop themselves into a cohesive team focused on managing large, complex, high consequence incidents.” The Citywide IMT should include operational public safety personnel (particularly from the LAPD IMTs), as well as representatives from the mayor's staff—and other elected and City officials—to ensure collaboration, coordination, and unity of command. The Citywide IMT should also train regularly through tabletop and full-scale exercises.

²⁵⁴ National Police Foundation. 2020. How to Conduct an After Action Review. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. <https://www.policefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/How-to-Conduct-an-AAR.pdf>

²⁵⁵ Also referred to as the Multi-agency Coordination Group (MAC). Online at: training.fema.gov – “Unit 5: NIMS Coordination: MAC and Joint Information System.”

Recommendation 2.2.3: All City of Los Angeles elected officials, and personnel from each of the relevant City offices and agencies, should complete the appropriate level of ICS training if they have not already done so, and take regular refresher courses. A US Department of Justice report advises, “Incident management organizations and personnel at all levels of government and within the private sector and nongovernmental organizations must be appropriately trained to improve all-hazards incident management capability...Training involves standard courses on incident command and management, incident management structure, operational coordination processes and systems—together with courses focused on discipline and agency-specific subject matter expertise—helps ensure that personnel at all jurisdictional levels and across disciplines can function effectively together during an incident.”²⁵⁶

Recommendation 2.2.4: The City of Los Angeles and LAPD should conduct joint regularly-scheduled First Amendment assemblies, protest, mass violence, and other critical incident tabletop and full-scale exercises. While some LA elected officials and LAPD personnel identified the frequency with which they coordinate in response to natural disasters including earthquakes and fires, they also indicated that there are not enough exercises on other events.

Finding 2.3: Communication within LAPD—particularly in the first few days—was inconsistent between the Chief, his command staff, bureau commanders and field supervisors, and line officers. This created significant challenges regarding: (a) identifying a cogent operating philosophy; (b) determining operations during individual shifts, including when shifts started and ended; and, (c) establishing coordination and consistency between shifts. Senior level command staff and first-line supervisors made similar observations that there was confusion regarding who the Incident Commander was at times, which command post was responsible for final decisions, and what the overall LAPD strategy and mission was. This impacted every component of the LAPD response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 2.3.1: LAPD should establish a planning team that includes command staff, training, equipment, communications, logistics, and intelligence to ensure plans receive the necessary attention to detail in these areas. Identifying personnel to focus on specific areas of the plan is valuable to ensure that there is full understanding of the resources, systems, and needs and to ensure the viability of the plan.

Recommendation 2.3.2: LAPD should update and enhance its Emergency Operations Guide: Volume 5 to address all components of First Amendment Assemblies and Mass Demonstrations, as opposed to focusing on crowd management and crowd control.²⁵⁷ The updated Guide should include: scalable strategies for, and immediate steps to take when, responding to spontaneous First Amendment assemblies and mass demonstrations; roles, responsibilities, and specific assignments for all ranks and positions as they relate to NIMS; processes for establishing and staffing a Joint Information Center (JIC) that includes relevant City stakeholders and agency representatives; and, coordinating with

²⁵⁶ Bureau of Justice Assistance. “Mutual Aid: Multijurisdictional Partnerships for Meeting Regional Threats.” NCJ160113. 2005. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/210679.pdf> (accessed December 11, 2017).

²⁵⁷ See footnote 71.

geographic command centers. The LAPD should consult with community members and organizers, civil rights attorneys, internal experts, national-level experts, and academic experts in policing.

Recommendation 2.3.3: LAPD should practice establishment of ICS in different scenarios and should develop lists of personnel with the appropriate training and capacities to fill the necessary leadership positions in each section. One of the challenges LAPD faced initially was the incomplete establishment of a command system that fully implemented NIMS/ICS. The lack of some of these positions—including Planning, Intelligence/Investigations, and Logistics—contributed to the initial lack of coordination in the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 2.4: The issuing and cancellation of Tactical Alerts contributed to confusion and frustration amongst supervisors and officers.

Recommendation 2.4.1: LAPD should establish clear processes for identifying and deploying appropriate personnel to planned and spontaneous critical incidents, including First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 2.5: LAPD did not effectively leverage intelligence and information city-wide—including publicly-available social media—that may have enhanced situational awareness of officers and their ability to rapidly assess multiple venues and deploy resources. LAPD did not fully leverage and communicate throughout the department open sources of intelligence and social media to account for the size, evolution, and adaptability of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. While the LAPD Special Events Permit Unit (SEPU), received permit requests for some of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, many more spontaneous demonstrations did not allow for the development of Event Action Plans (EAPs) or Incident Command System (ICS) plans. While many LAPD commands gathered intelligence on significant First Amendment assemblies and protests—including possibly disruptive groups—it was not compiled, deconflicted, or leveraged across the LAPD to strategically deploy resources.

Recommendation 2.5.1: LAPD should work with the community to consider collaborative approaches and technology solutions and strategies that will enhance situational awareness and improve community and officer safety.

Recommendation 2.5.2: LAPD should develop a process to ensure that intelligence and information gathered to improve public safety is appropriately incorporated in the command structure. This information should be shared promptly and consistently with the Incident Commander as well as relevant department and bureau command posts and should be factored into planning and preparedness.

Finding 2.6: LAPD should develop, implement, and review MOUs with the LASD and other law enforcement agencies to support and clearly define roles, responsibilities, and protocols to First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Finding 3.1: Although a virtual JIC was established, the review process impacted the ability of LAPD to post timely messages to its social media accounts.

Recommendation 3.1.1: The City of Los Angeles should establish a unified narrative and public messaging strategy around first amendment assemblies (before, during, and after) that informs the public about City leadership’s position on supporting free speech during First Amendment assemblies, but clearly defines consequences for those responsible for committing violence or destruction during such assemblies.

Recommendation 3.1.2: The City of LA and LAPD should develop policies and procedures that use social media to “push” information to the community and quickly disseminate accurate information in response to rumors, misinformation, and false accusations.

Finding 3.2: The LAPD decision to not fully leverage social media to share information and respond to false accusations allowed demonstrators to control the narrative and overwhelm LAPD on the information front.

Recommendation 3.2.1: LAPD should create a clear and detailed media strategy to guide the department’s use of traditional news media and social media, particularly during critical incidents.

Recommendation 3.2.2: LAPD should consider leveraging new and emerging technologies including reverse-text alert systems—and continue leveraging social media—to disseminate dispersal warnings and curfew notices.

Finding 4.1: For more than 50 years, LAPD has endeavored to assist its personnel through Behavioral Science Services and aligned groups. In many ways, LAPD should be recognized for its innovative programs and leadership in the law enforcement profession regarding physical and mental wellness.

Finding 4.2: The research is clear that law enforcement personnel are exposed to significant traumatic events during the course of their careers. This exposure increases the likelihood of negative physical and mental health impacts that extend beyond an officer's law enforcement career.

Recommendation 4.2.1: LAPD should continue to support the capacity of Behavioral Science Services, the Peer Support Team, and other aligned groups to assist Department personnel and their families address trauma, build resiliency and support physical and mental health.

Finding 4.3: LAPD, elected officials and the LA community should recognize that research indicates that crowd management and other critical incidents have a significant negative impact on law enforcement personnel, their significant others, and children. This not only impacts officers' ability to positively engage with the community, a cornerstone of community policing, but also contributes to the cycle of community trauma.

Recommendation 4.3.1: LAPD should consider deploying BSS psychologists to the DOC, and COVID-19 permitting, to divisions to conduct defusings and debriefings during extended crowd management periods as well as continue employee and family outreach and engagement activities to mitigate trauma and to connect officers to services in real time. This and other wellness resources for officers on extended deployment should be coordinated by a Mental Health Incident Commander that reports to the Safety Officer within the Incident Command Structure. The MHIC should manage all mental health-related tasks, especially during First Amendment assemblies and protests, while the Safety Officer focuses on traditional components of physical safety.

Finding 4.4: COVID-19, the deaths of nine members of the Department, deaths and serious illness among loved ones, and the fear of infecting family members placed untold stress on the LAPD, and exacerbated the stress and trauma associated with crowd management during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 4.4.1: Recognizing the impact of COVID-19; extended shifts and cancelled days; violence directed at officers; threats to their families; highly charged rhetoric; and loss of public trust and confidence—LAPD leadership, in particular, as well as elected officials and the LA community should recognize the importance of supporting officers and their families during this challenging period.

Finding 4.5: Officer morale has been described almost universally as ‘at an all-time low’. In addition to being the “target” of the protests, frustration with LAPD leadership and inconsistent messaging, and statements and decisions made by elected officials during and after the protests have been perceived as a lack of support for the department. There were significant resignations and retirements in 2020 and early 2021, with some of the individuals citing the combination of the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, the COVID-19 pandemic, and anti-police rhetoric as their reasons.

In May 2015, the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) observed:



*The wellness and safety of law enforcement officers is critical not only to themselves, their colleagues, and their agencies but also to public safety. An officer whose capabilities, judgement, and behaviors are adversely affected by poor physical or psychological health not only may be of little use to the community he or she serves but also may be a danger to the community and to other officers.*²⁵⁸

*Hurt people can hurt people.*²⁵⁹

As the City of Los Angeles, elected officials, and the LAPD work to reimagine policing, strengthen the Department’s community policing programs, and repair fractured community relations, there must be collective action and a concerted effort to address trauma in the Department and the community it serves.

²⁵⁸ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. 2015. Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

Finding 5.1: LAPD has a history of professional policing, positive engagement, and strong relationships with business owners and Business Improvement District (BID) organizations, faith- and community-based institutions and organizations, and the Los Angeles community, including activists. They were able to leverage those relationships during responses to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 5.1.1: LAPD should continue to identify opportunities to engage community members—particularly those community members and leaders likely to organize and participate in First Amendment assemblies and mass demonstrations—in the preparation and training process.²⁶⁰

Recommendation 5.1.2: LAPD should continue to invest in community policing efforts including engaging one-on-one or in small groups to build relations and obtain feedback from communities in each bureau. Community members interviewed told the NPF assessment team that the Community-Police Advisory Boards (C-PABs) and BID meetings are important opportunities for them to meet and engage with their local police officers and supervisors, as well as identify and discuss local issues, concerns, and strategies. Particularly around the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, these meetings were helpful in sharing information about potential demonstrations and routes.

Recommendation 5.1.3: LAPD should continue to engage C-PABs, BID meetings, and other community engagement opportunities to provide the community a voice and meaningful involvement in how its police department operates—including strategic hiring and promotions, training, policy development, and other activities to improve community-police relations.

Finding 5.2: Despite ongoing efforts to improve relationships, the history of LAPD is also punctuated with tensions between the community and the department (as well as narratives highlighting tensions between various communities and the police around the nation). These tensions and narratives continue to inform perceptions of the police in Los Angeles.

Recommendation 5.2.1: LAPD training programs on community-police interactions, implicit bias, and building and maintaining trust should continue and build on lessons learned during recent First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Recommendation 5.2.2: Each LAPD bureau should continue to identify opportunities to engage community members—particularly those community members and leaders likely to organize and participate in First Amendment assemblies and protests in their area—in the preparation and training process. These opportunities have helped officers and community members in other jurisdictions develop mutual understanding and conduct full-scale training exercises with those likely to demonstrate.

²⁶⁰ See footnote 115.

Appendix B: Detailed Methodology

At the request of the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners, the National Police Foundation (NPF) created an assessment team to conduct an independent after-action review (AAR) of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred from May 27 through June 7, 2020. The NPF assessment team, comprising subject matter experts in law enforcement, police-community relations, response to First Amendment assemblies and protests, policy analysis, police data analysis, and research, developed a comprehensive mixed methodology to thoroughly review and assess the LAPD and City of Los Angeles (LA) response to the First Amendment assemblies and protests that followed the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020.

The AAR involved multiple means of information gathering, collection, and analysis: (1) interviews, focus groups, listening sessions, and anonymous feedback; (2) LAPD and City of LA resource material review and data analyses; (3) open source news and social media review; and, (4) national resource review. The NPF assessment team used the totality of the information gathered to identify key areas to develop a series of findings and recommendations for LA, LAPD, and the community.

Interviews and Focus Groups

While the NPF assessment team normally conducts site visits to be able to host in-person interviews and focus groups; to gain situational awareness and perspective of the locales, distances/proximities, and potential challenges related to crowd control and responding officers establishing on-scene command; and, to engage community members individually and through community listening sessions, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NPF assessment team was unable to conduct any site visits. However, virtual interviews were conducted with more than 45 individuals, including the following:

- **Representatives from the Mayor’s Office and Executive Staff;**
- **City Councilmembers;**
- **LAPD Chief of Police and command staff;**
- **LAPD Public Information personnel;**
- **Los Angeles Police Protective League (LAPPL) board members;**
- **Los Angeles business representatives;**
- **Los Angeles religious and community leaders; and,**
- **Los Angeles community members.**

In addition to individual interviews, the NPF assessment team scheduled four 90-minute virtual focus groups/listening sessions for LAPD officers; four 90-minute virtual listening sessions for LAPD sergeants; and, one with the LAPPL board to provide opportunities for them to provide input on their experiences during the response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. The NPF assessment team also provided several means through which LAPD members could reach out to schedule interviews or focus groups or to provide written input anonymously. Four LAPPL Board members, four sergeants, and one officer participated. The NPF assessment team also conducted a series of focus groups and individual interviews with family members of LAPD personnel.

The NPF assessment team also held four 60-minute virtual open listening sessions for community members: two on February 4, 2021 and two on February 17, 2021. A total of 128 community members attended these sessions.

LAPD and City of LA Resources Material Review and Data Analyses

The NPF assessment team collected and reviewed relevant LAPD policies, procedures, training curricula, chronology logs, data, and other materials provided by LAPD. Each resource was reviewed to better understand LAPD's response to First Amendment assemblies and protests. Materials reviewed included the following:

- **LAPD Directives, operational manuals, internal memoranda and special orders, and notices;**
- **LAPD academy and in-service training curricula/expanded course outlines and lesson plans, guides, training records, and Training Bulletins;**
- **Incident Action Plans, Event Action Plans, and chronology logs;**
- **Incident Command System (ICS) forms;**
- **LAPD social media content;**
- **Communications logs;**
- **Arrest, crime, calls for service, booking, property damage, and socio-economic data; and,**
- **Officer wellness plans and injury data.**

Additionally, LAPD provided the NPF assessment team with approximately two terabytes of videos, images, and radio channel recordings. LAPD also provided access to 147,921 videos and images from body-worn cameras.

Data Sources and Analyses

The NPF assessment team also analyzed a series of data to identify hotspots of First Amendment assembly and protest activity from May 27 through June 7, 2020. Five datasets were used to identify these hotspots. Table 1 summarizes the volume, date range, and source of each dataset used in the identification process.

Table 1 Summary of the Datasets

Dataset	Description	Source
Arrest Data	This dataset reflects 2,298 arrest incidents in Los Angeles from May 27, 2020 through June 10, 2020.	Los Angeles City Open Data Portal ²⁶¹
Crime Data	This dataset reflects 8,324 reported incidents of crime in Los Angeles from May 27, 2020 through June 10, 2020.	
Calls for Service Data	This dataset reflects 47,236 calls for service incidents in Los Angeles from May 27, 2020 through June 10, 2020.	Los Angeles Police Department
Vehicle Impound Data	This dataset reflects 1,562 incidents of vehicle impound in Los Angeles from May 27, 2020 through June 5, 2020.	
Property Damage Data	This dataset reflects 124 reported incidents of property damage in Los Angeles from May 31, 2020 through June 18, 2020.	

²⁶¹ City of Los Angeles. (2021). Los Angeles Open Data. <https://data.lacity.org/>

The identification of protest hotspot activity was done through visual and spatial analytics that identified temporal and spatial clusters within the five datasets. The NPF assessment team spatially referenced all datasets and created tools to combine the data for both spatial, temporal, and spatio-temporal analyses.

Data Preprocessing

The five datasets were preprocessed to ensure the quality and completeness of the data. The first step was to spatially reference events via geocoding. Arrest and crime datasets were received with spatial coordinates provided by the LAPD; the vehicle impound and property damage datasets were not provided with spatial information necessitating geocoding by project staff. To address this issue, the geocoder Nominatim²⁶² was used to match address information with spatial data found in OpenStreetMap. Ultimately, the NPF assessment team was able to geocode 1,024 vehicle impounds and 98 reports of property damage.

In the calls for service dataset, the NPF assessment team dropped records where “Code” was equal to 6 as these calls for service were outside the LAPD service area. In the end, 29,674 records were retained in the calls for service dataset.

Data Visualization

After data cleaning, a secure Internet application was developed to allow the NPF assessment team to view mapping incidents and interactive visualizations.²⁶³ This application supports the following functions that assist the team to identify hotspots.

Visualizing Density Heatmaps

Density heat maps are a simple and effective way to find the spatial concentration of incidents. To create density heat maps, the NPF assessment team first aggregated all incidents by the geographical coordinates and counted incidents per location. The longitude and latitude were used as the input for x- and y-axis, and the count determined the magnitude of each data point. Six density heatmaps were created in the Internet application. Each of the five data sources was used to create separate density heatmaps; the sixth map was a composite of all datasets. Each map supported user interaction. Users could zoom in on the map to see the street names. Also, hovering the datapoints would show the tooltips containing the geographical coordinates and the number of reported incidents.

²⁶² Github. Nominatim API. <https://nominatim.org/release-docs/develop/api/Overview/>

²⁶³ Plotly. (2021). Dash. <https://plotly.com/dash/>

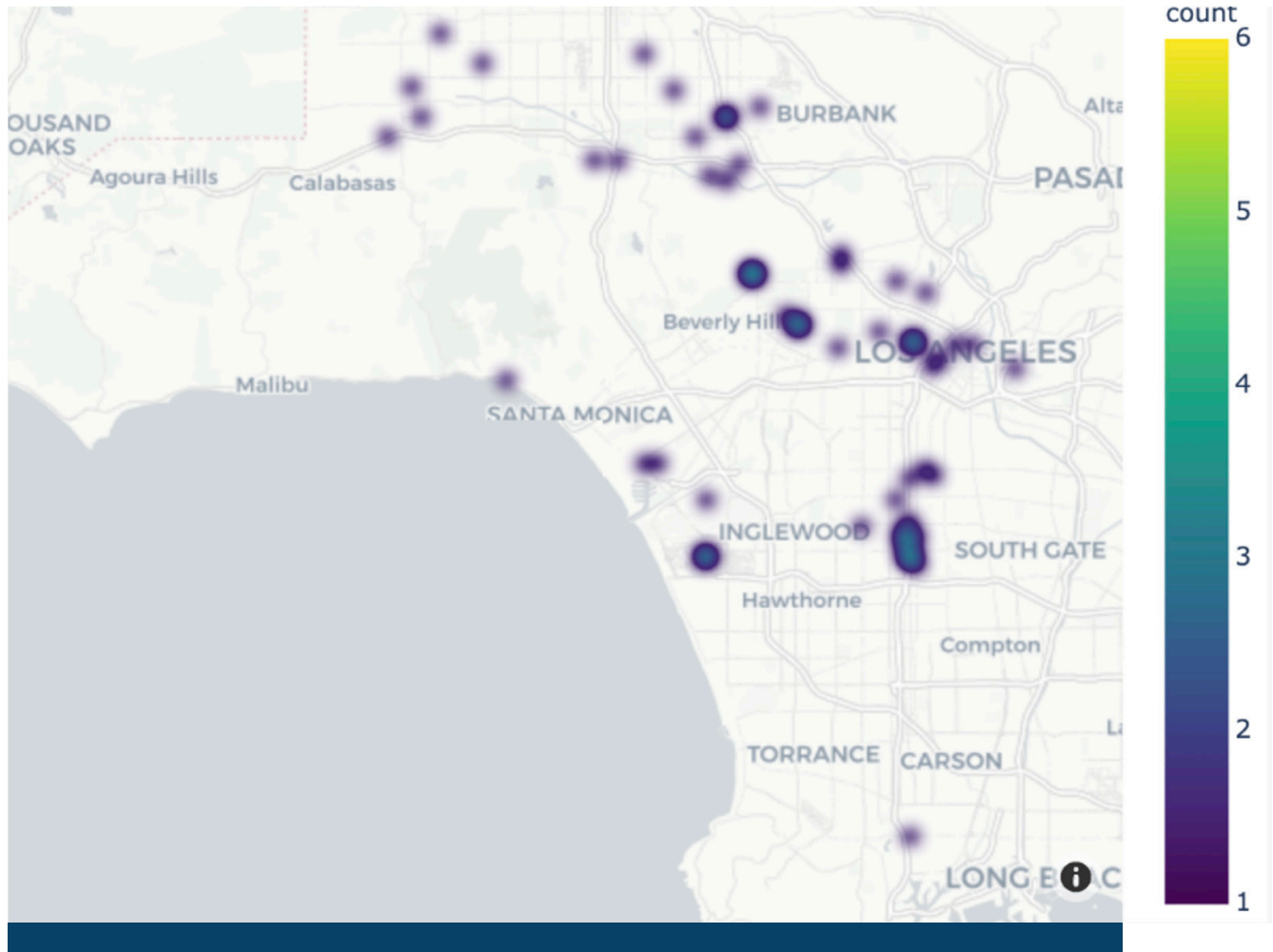
Figure 1 Density Heatmap of All Data Points

Figure 1 (above) shows an example of the density heatmap the NPF assessment team rendered in the Internet application. It shows the density of all incidents in Los Angeles on May 27, 2020. It is intuitive to observe the incidents were clustered in the downtown area, southern LA, and the northwestern area.

Hierarchical Density-Based Spatial Clustering of Applications with Noise

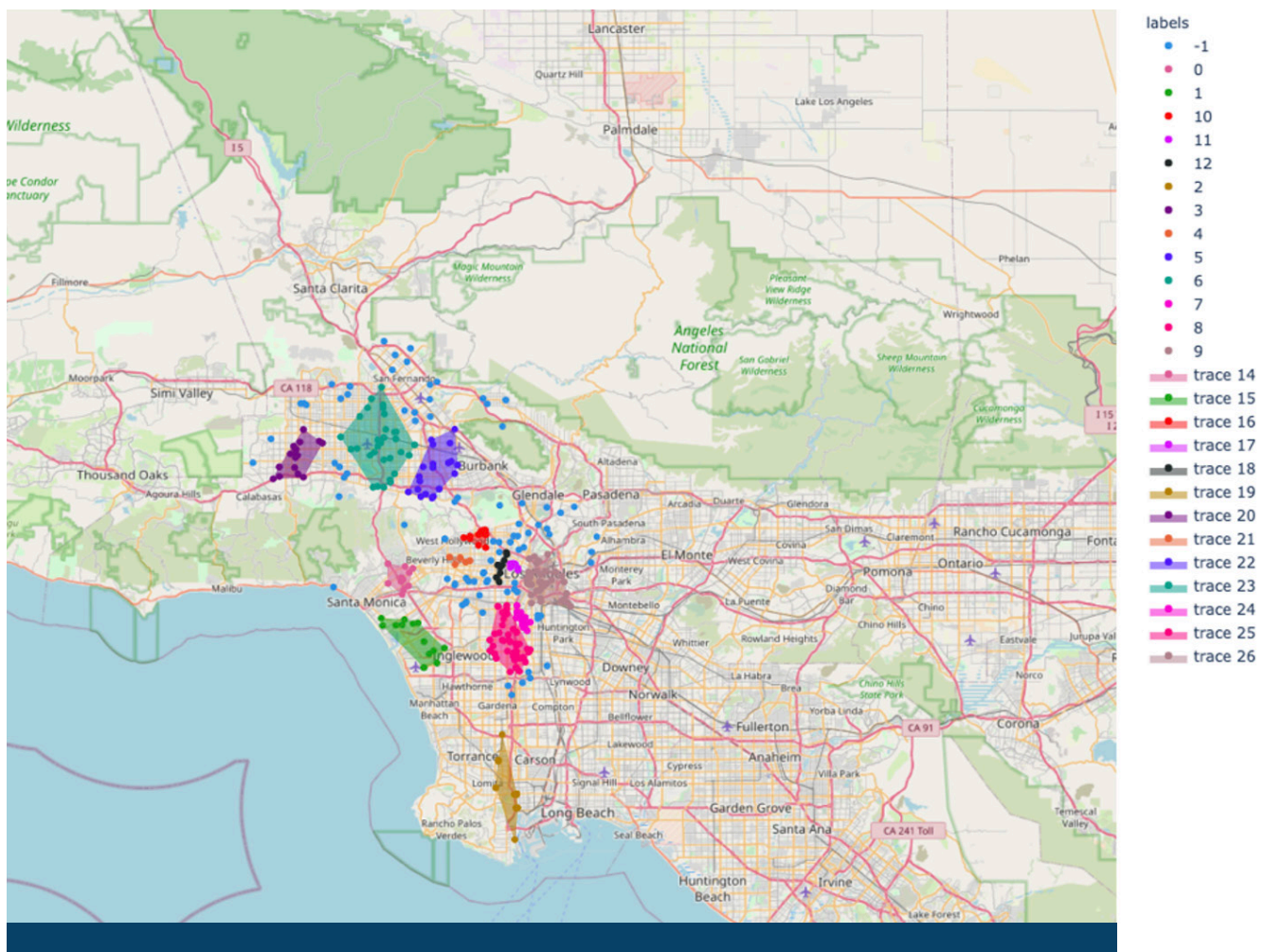
Hierarchical Density-Based Spatial Clustering of Applications with Noise (HDBSCAN) is a robust and efficient clustering algorithm that was implemented to automate the process of finding clusters.²⁶⁴ It estimates the density of a region that has data input, finds regions with high density, and combines the data in selected regions to form a hierarchy.

²⁶⁴ Campello, R. J. G. B., Moulavi, D., & Sander, J. (2013). Density-Based Clustering Based on Hierarchical Density Estimates. In J. Pei, V. S. Tseng, L. Cao, H. Motoda, & G. Xu (Eds.), *Advances in Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining* (pp. 160–172). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-37456-2_14

Two important parameters were configured to identify clusters: (1) the minimum cluster size and (2) the minimum sample size. The larger the values of these parameters, the more conservative and generic the clustering results. To get more granular clusters, the NPF assessment team set the minimum cluster size as 10 and the minimum sample size as 1. After obtaining the cluster assignments of each data point, the NPF assessment team calculated the convex hull of each cluster, which is the smallest convex polygon enclosing all of the data points in that specific cluster.

In the end, the clustering results of HDBSCAN were color-coded and each was overlaid with its convex hull. Figure 2 (below) shows an example of HDBSCAN visualization. Using this approach, the spatial clusters of incidents were foregrounded. The interactivity of the visualization supported users to filter specific clusters on the map for scrutiny. Overall, this section supplemented the heatmap created above, translating the density into concrete polygons for cluster identification.

Figure 2 Example of HDBSCAN Results



Human-intelligence based map annotations

Despite automating the clustering procedure using HDBSCAN, the NPF assessment team also incorporated cross-platform human annotations. The annotations were later exported into a shapefile that loaded into the map and overlaid with the density heatmap.

Temporal Filtering

The NPF assessment team designed time filters to add temporal constraints to the datasets. Instead of grouping the dataset by date, the NPF assessment team provided a more flexible way to filter out the time that recognizes the temporal pattern of the incidents: filtering datasets by date and hours with a fixed length of time windows. Three kinds of time filters were presented to the users for customization:

- **Date select box (Date, May 27, 2020 through June 18, 2020)**
- **Hour select slider (Numeric, 0 to 23)**
- **Time window check box (Numeric, 4 or 8 or 12)**

The input value of time window X was added and subtracted to the selected date and time, creating the time range that encompasses X hours before and after the selected date and time. Using this filter, the data across different dates were aggregated together for analysis and automatically updated the abovementioned maps.

Filtering datasets by Arrest and Crime Type

The NPF assessment team was also allowed to filter the type of arrest and crime information. This filter was used as a way to dismiss some records that were unlikely to be associated with the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Social Media Data Integration

The NPF assessment team harvested social media posts on Twitter as an additional source of information for the hotspot identification. Social media, especially Twitter, has been regarded as the most prominent platform for posting information about protests and activism.^{265 266} Incorporating social media data expanded the NPF assessment team's data sources and helped to verify hotspots identified in the previous datasets. The NPF assessment team started with developing a comprehensive query to search for relevant tweets. The search query has four parts:

- **(Protest) AND**
- **(Police brutality OR Police OR Force OR Assault) AND**
- **(LAPD) OR**
- **(BLM OR George Floyd OR Racism)**

²⁶⁵ Bonilla, Y., & Rosa, J. (2015). #Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States. *American Ethnologist*, 42(1), 4–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12112>

²⁶⁶ Trotter, D., & Fuchs, C. (2014). *Social media, politics and the state: Protests, revolutions, riots, crime and policing in the age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube*. Routledge.

A total of 71,048 tweets were retrieved using Twitter’s official with a selected time range of May 17, 2020 through June 20, 2020. The NPF assessment team approach to analyzing social media mainly focused on text and pictures, which are the most common communication methods on social media about the protests.^{267 268 269} The analyses results were rendered in two Internet applications compiled using the Streamlit framework.²⁷⁰

LAPD Tweet Text Explorer

This application supported exploratory text analysis of the collection of tweet data. In this application, users were able to customize the dataset and review specific groups of tweets to gather information about the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. This application had a number of components. First, it allowed the NPF assessment team to visualize daily trends such as the number of tweets by day and time. Second, the Explorer assisted the NPF assessment team with understanding keywords through the creation of word clouds. Two metrics were calculated to determine important keywords among the tweets, namely the term frequency and the term frequency-inversed document frequency. Users can choose one of the ranking metrics to generate word clouds. Additionally, the NPF assessment team provided customizations that allowed filtering out selected words and selecting the number of terms to show in the word cloud. Figure 3 (below) is an example of the word cloud generated in the Internet application. It shows the important words that were central to the online discussion around the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests.

Figure 3 Important Terms Word Cloud



²⁶⁷ Bosch, T., & Mutsaers, B. (2017). Pictures, protests and politics: Mapping Twitter images during South Africa’s fees must fall campaign. *African Journalism Studies*, 38(2), 71–89.

²⁶⁸ Grossman, L. (2009). Iran protests: Twitter, the medium of the movement. *Time Magazine*, 17.

Gupta, A., Dollár, P., & Girshick, R. (2019). LVIS: A Dataset for Large Vocabulary Instance Segmentation. ArXiv:1908.03195 [Cs]. <http://arxiv.org/abs/1908.03195>

²⁶⁹ Wetzstein, I. (2017). The visual discourse of protest movements on Twitter: The case of Hong Kong 2014. *Media and Communication*, 5(4), 26–36.

²⁷⁰ Streamlit Inc. (2021). Streamlit. <https://www.streamlit.io/>

Third, the Explorer assisted the NPF assessment team with visualizing important hashtags in a word cloud. Hashtags are quintessential to online communication on Twitter. They are especially important to protests and activism as a way of building online community.²⁷¹ ²⁷² Tracking important hashtags helps find key individuals and groups and identifies key protest places. The Explorer application rendered the word cloud with the most important hashtags using all the tweets or using tweets from a specific date. This function helped the NPF assessment team understand trends of hashtag usage and aided in finding any emerging protests and their relevant information.

Beyond aggregating information about tweets, the Explorer also supported the filtering of specific tweets by hashtags and time. This manual process allowed NPF assessment team members to scrutinize specific tweets' texts for further investigation.

LAPD Tweet Image Explorer

The image explorer was designed to analyze images embedded in tweets using Facebook's AI Research's computer vision framework, Detectron.²⁷³ Two mask computer neural network (CNN) image segmentation models were applied to 10,133 images derived from 71,048 tweets.²⁷⁴ The first model was the Common Objects in Context (COCO) dataset²⁷⁵ while the second was the Large Vocabulary Instance Segmentation (LVIS) dataset.²⁷⁶ The results of object detection were then visualized in the Internet application.

Similar to the LAPD Tweet Text Explorer, the NPF assessment team visualized the daily trends of the number of images in the tweets as a bar chart to help users understand volume in trends of posting pictures. Going a step further, the Image Explorer allowed for visualizing objects detected in the images and the changes in object presence over time. Three versions of every image could be presented in the application: the original one in the tweet and the image highlighted with detected objects with both COCO and LVIS-trained models.

Figure 4 (below) demonstrates how identified objects are depicted in Image Explorer. In this example, the detected objects include people and a backpack. Every detected object is shadowed and masked by a box indicating the type of object and the confidence of the detection. Also, the aggregated value showing the general trends of objects with time were visualized in a line chart. These functions provided an automatic way to analyze and summarize the key information from the tweets.

²⁷¹ Cumberbatch, P., & Trujillo-Pagán, N. (2016). Hashtag activism and why# BlackLivesMatter in (and to) the classroom. *Radical Teacher*, 106.

²⁷² Segerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social media and the organization of collective action: Using Twitter to explore the ecologies of two climate change protests. *The Communication Review*, 14(3), 197–215.

²⁷³ <https://github.com/facebookresearch/detectron>.

²⁷⁴ He, K., Gkioxari, G., Dollár, P., & Girshick, R. (2018). Mask R-CNN. ArXiv:1703.06870 [Cs]. <http://arxiv.org/abs/1703.06870>

²⁷⁵ Lin, T.-Y., Maire, M., Belongie, S., Bourdev, L., Girshick, R., Hays, J., Perona, P., Ramanan, D., Zitnick, C. L., & Dollár, P. (2015). Microsoft COCO: Common Objects in Context. ArXiv:1405.0312 [Cs]. <http://arxiv.org/abs/1405.0312>

²⁷⁶ Gupta, A., Dollár, P., & Girshick, R. (2019). LVIS: A Dataset for Large Vocabulary Instance Segmentation. ArXiv:1908.03195 [Cs]. <http://arxiv.org/abs/1908.03195>

Figure 4 Example of Object Detection Result

Image Explorer ranked images by their influence (retweet count and favorite count) relative to other tweets. The most viral and influential images were shown first to enumerate the pool of images for examination by the NPF assessment team. A scatter plot with retweet count (as x-axis) and favorite count (as y-axis) was plotted in the application. A slider bar was designed for users to view the images in the order based on the influence.

Further filtering of the dataset by keywords, objects, and time was also possible in Image Explorer. The NPF assessment team designed several functions that allowed for filtering out only the most important images. A text input box was also implemented that allowed the NPF assessment team to only display tweets that contained desired keywords. Also, users could select the images to explore based on the detected objects. Since the images about protests usually are of similar elements, (e.g., helmet, backpack, banner, flag, and street sign) filters reduce the pool of images to help identify the most relevant content.

Open Source News and Social Media Review

The NPF assessment team reviewed hundreds of news media articles and videos, as well as social media posts and footage from the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests. In addition to using social media posts to assist in the identification of hotspots of activity, as described above, social media posts were used to provide additional perspective on the LAPD response to protesters and to identify potential areas of policy review for the NPF assessment team.

National Resource Review

In addition to the information collected from the City of LA and LAPD, and to ground the AAR in national standards, model policies, and promising practices, the NPF assessment team researched and reviewed scholarship on First Amendment assemblies and protests with an emphasis on de-escalation procedures. The NPF assessment team also reviewed and analyzed relevant AARs from national incidents including other First Amendment assemblies and protests that occurred during the same time period. The NPF assessment team also reviewed information such as the National Incident Management System, Incident Command System, and other relevant topics published by researchers from academia and from organizations including the following:

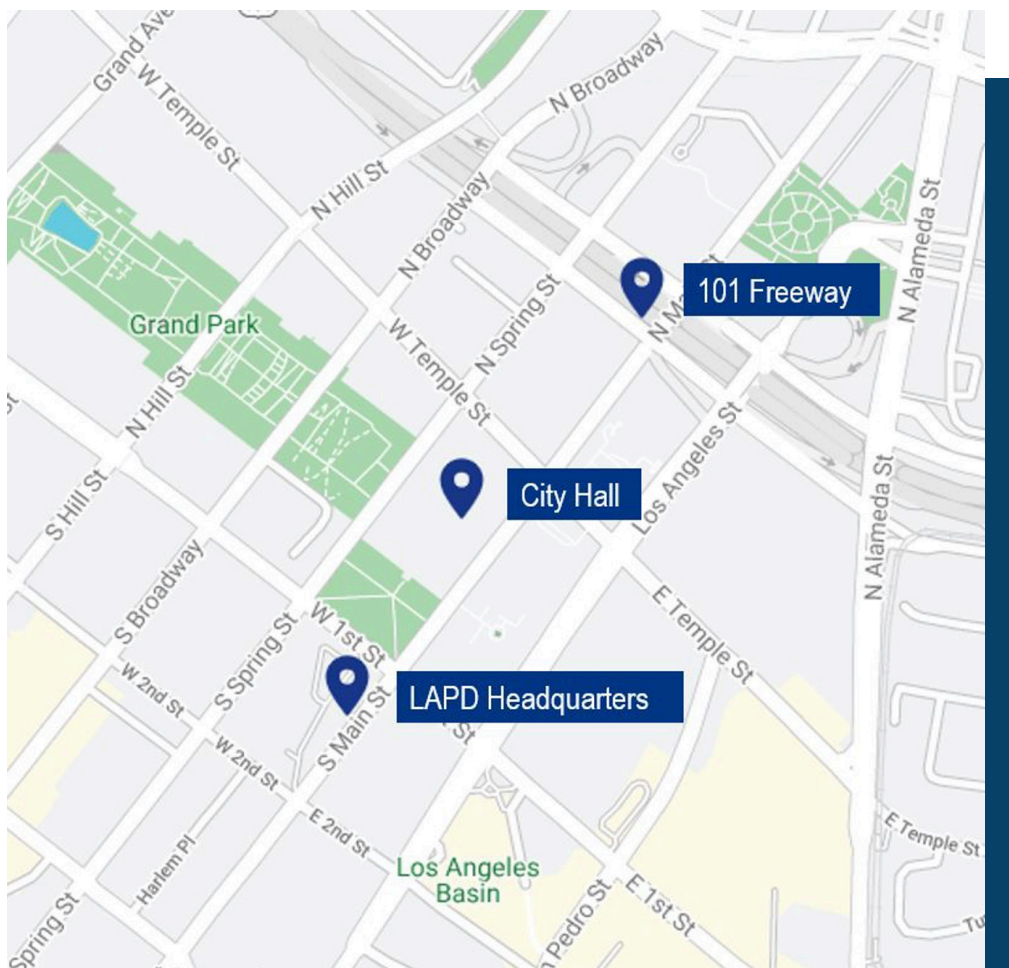
- **US Department of Justice;**
- **US Department of Homeland Security;**
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency;**
- **International Association of Chiefs of Police;**
- **Police Executive Research Forum; and,**
- **National Police Foundation.**

Appendix C: Timeline of Events

The First Three Days: Wednesday, May 27 – Friday, May 29, 2020

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Approximately 100 individuals gathered and began to march in the streets around City Hall at around 4:00pm.²⁷⁷ After a largely peaceful protest, at approximately 6:00pm, a group broke off and hundreds of protesters marched through the streets downtown, towards, and onto, the 101 Freeway, temporarily blocking motorists.²⁷⁸ The protesters spent approximately 30 minutes on the Freeway, before they were ushered back into the downtown area and continued to march near North Alameda Street and East Aliso Street.²⁷⁹ At one point, protesters burned an upside-down American flag and used graffiti to vandalize LAPD Headquarters.²⁸⁰



²⁷⁷ See footnote 149.

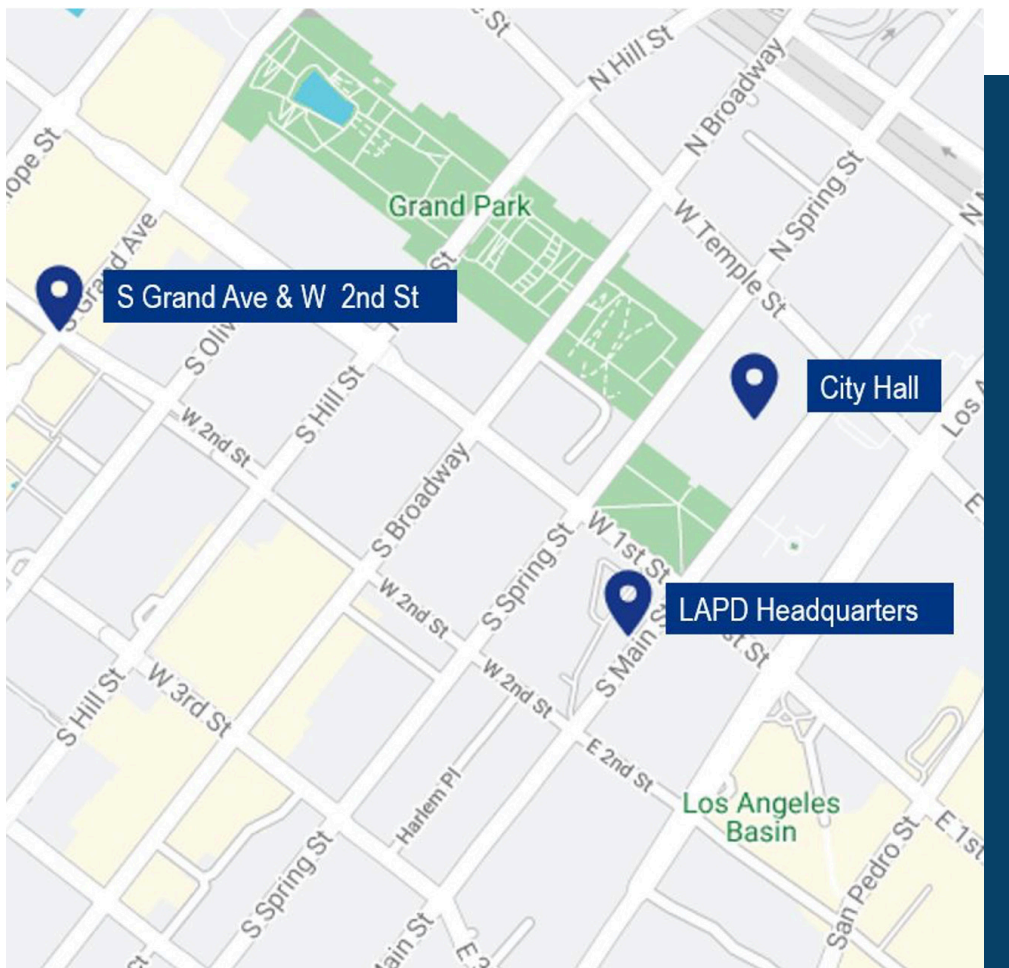
²⁷⁸ Ormseth, Matthew, et al. (2020, May 27). "Protesters, Law Enforcement Clash in Downtown L.A. during Protest over George Floyd's Death." Los Angeles Times. www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-05-27/protesters-block-the-101-freeway.

²⁷⁹ City News Service. (2020, May 27). "Black Lives Matter Protest in LA Temporarily Closes 101 Freeway, 1 Injured." Los Angeles Daily News. www.dailynews.com/2020/05/27/black-lives-matter-protest-in-la-temporarily-closes-101-freeway-1-injured/

²⁸⁰ See footnote 149.

Thursday, May 28, 2020

At approximately 5:00pm, a group of close to 70 protesters once again gathered downtown, this time in front of LAPD headquarters. At approximately 7:20pm, several protesters clashed with officers as they attempted to move their police cruisers; during these skirmishes, protesters vandalized several cruisers.²⁸¹ Meanwhile, another group of protesters gathered and started to march away from LAPD Headquarters and moved downtown. Along the way, plainclothes LAPD officers reported several instances of vandalism.²⁸² Based on those reports, when the group of protesters reached the intersection of South Grand Avenue and West Second Street, LAPD issued a dispersal order.²⁸³



²⁸¹ See footnote 149.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Valdez, Jonah, and Elizabeth Chou. (2020, May 28). "Protesters Return to Streets Thursday Night in Los Angeles over Killing of George Floyd." Los Angeles Daily News. www.dailynews.com/2020/05/28/protesters-return-to-streets-thursday-night-in-los-angeles-over-killing-of-george-floyd/

Protesters separated and headed in several different directions.²⁸⁴ More LAPD resources arrived and dispersal orders continued.²⁸⁵ Despite more LAPD resources arriving downtown, the groups of protesters continued to evade officers and sprung up in several areas of the downtown area of the city, including another attempt to access the Freeway.²⁸⁶ There were also multiple reports of attempted, and successful, break-ins and looting at businesses across the downtown area, as well as vandalism of police vehicles.²⁸⁷

Friday, May 29, 2020

On Friday, May 29, community members reported several small groups of protesters blocking intersections throughout the city. By approximately 5:00pm, a group of protesters which had gathered in front of City Hall and began to march peacefully, with LAPD facilitating the group's movements by blocking traffic along the way.²⁸⁸ LAPD officers were also assigned as protection for the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), as they responded to fire and medical incidents within the crowd.²⁸⁹ It was reported that as LAFD responded to extinguish a fire, a bystander seized the fire hose and threw it into the nearby flames.²⁹⁰

By approximately 7:00pm, the main crowd spanned approximately 2.5 city blocks, before dividing into three groups: one moved toward the 110 Freeway again, one group moved to South Hope and West Seventh Streets, and the last moved toward South Grand Avenue and West Seventh Street.²⁹¹ At approximately 8:00pm, the group was able to gain access to the 110 Freeway again.²⁹² While LAPD attempted to clear the Freeway, other protesters threw projectiles such as "eggs, rocks, glass bottles, road stanchions, broken concrete, and electric scooters" at the officers from an overpass.²⁹³ Other reports indicate protesters threw bottles of urine and fecal matter.²⁹⁴ Others state that officers were hit with projectiles such as rocks, bottles, and trash cans.²⁹⁵ Even after LAPD declared an unlawful assembly, at approximately 9:30pm,²⁹⁶ the tone of the evening only seemed to devolve further, as individuals looted and burglarized businesses, set trash cans and debris on fire, vandalized police vehicles, continued to block intersections throughout the city, and engaged with officers.²⁹⁷ Later in the evening, there were reports of demonstrators shining green lasers at LAPD's air unit.²⁹⁸

²⁸⁴ NPF assessment team interview with business representative. January 25, 2021

²⁸⁵ See footnote 149.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Valdez, Jonah, and Hunter Lee. (2020, May 29). "Stores Looted, Dozens Arrested in Aftermath of Los Angeles Protest." Los Angeles Daily News. www.dailynews.com/2020/05/29/protesters-march-again-friday-night-in-los-angeles-amid-growing-anger-nationwide-over-george-floyds-death/#:~:text=Businesses%20were%20looted%2C%20police%20vehicles,George%20Floyd%20in%20Minneapolis%20Monday

²⁹¹ CBS Los Angeles. (2020, May 29). "LAPD Declares Unlawful Assembly As Protesters, Police Clash Downtown; Looting Reported." CBS Los Angeles. <https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2020/05/29/los-angeles-george-floyd-protests-day-3/>

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ See footnote 149.

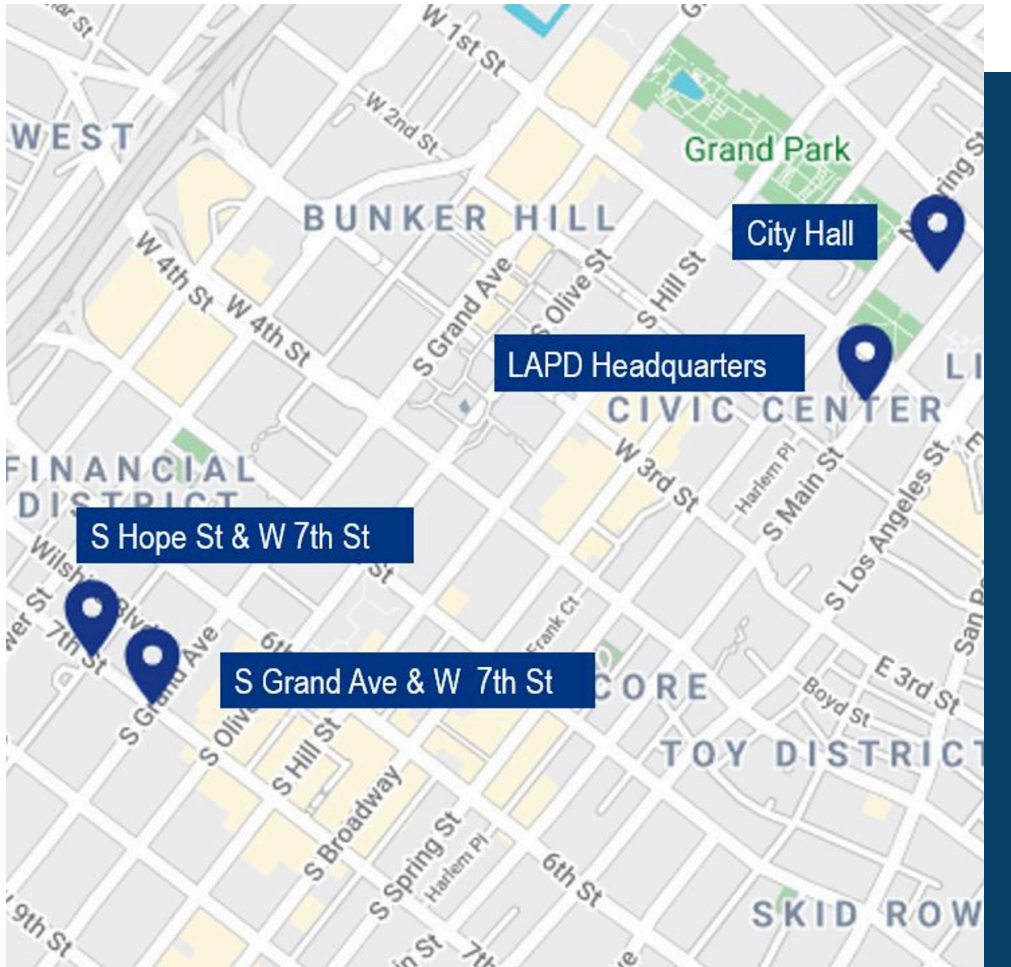
²⁹⁴ See footnote 291.

²⁹⁵ See footnote 149.

²⁹⁶ See footnote 291.

²⁹⁷ Vives, Ruben, et al. (2020, May 29). "Looting, Vandalism across Downtown L.A. as Protesters, Police Clash." Los Angeles Times. www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-05-29/protesters-outraged-over-george-floyd-death-shut-down-101-freeway-in-san-jose

²⁹⁸ See footnote 149.



Saturday, May 30 – Monday, June 1, 2020

Saturday, May 30, 2020

Within the first hour of May 30, LAPD officers in two separate locations reported shots fired by protesters.²⁹⁹ Looting and burglaries continued to be an issue, specifically in the jewelry district.³⁰⁰ Demonstrators continued to throw various projectiles at officers, set off fireworks in the streets, and set trash cans on fire.³⁰¹

Another demonstration—whose organizers had received a permit—was scheduled to meet at noon and march to the jail facilities and LAPD Headquarters downtown.³⁰² Yet another demonstration, hosted by the Coalition for Community Control Over the Police, was scheduled for 1:00pm to begin at LAPD’s Southeast Station.³⁰³ Finally, May 30 would be a “National Day of Protest” in the City of Los Angeles, calling for protesters to arrive at Mariachi Plaza at 3:00pm.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁹ See footnote 149.

300 Ibid.

301 Ibid.

³⁰² City News Service. (2020, May 30). "Officers Attacked, Businesses Looted in Downtown Demonstrations." Spectrum News. <https://spectrumnews1.com/ca/la-west/public-safety/2020/05/30/officers-attacked--businesses-looted-in-downtown-demonstrations>

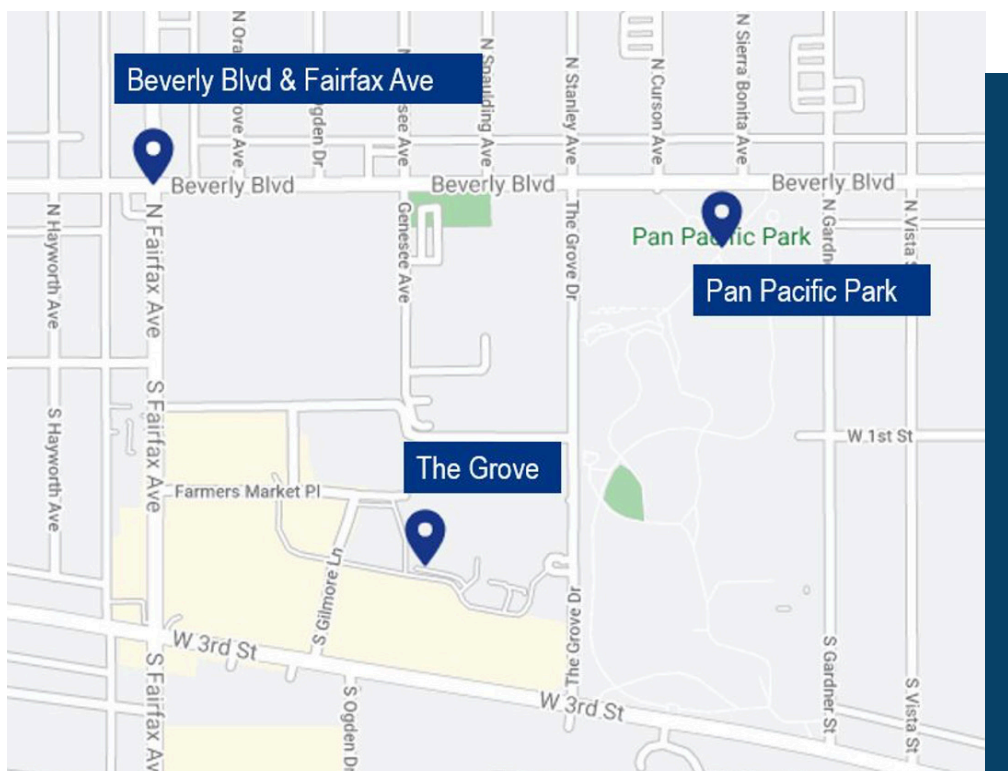
303 Ibid.

304 Ibid.

Pan Pacific Regional Park

There were several protests scheduled for the afternoon of May 30. One protest—for which a permit was received—was scheduled by Black Lives Matter Los Angeles and BLD PWR, to be held at Pan Pacific Regional Park, beginning at noon. At noon, approximately 500 people were in attendance in Pan Pacific Regional Park. LAPD's air unit estimated the group to number 1,500, and by approximately 1:00pm, an estimated 2,500 were in attendance.

At approximately 2:00pm, protesters started to move toward Beverly Hills. At that point, the tone of demonstration, which had begun peacefully, shifted as protesters began to clash with officers. There were also reports of projectiles being thrown at officers. At approximately 6:00pm the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) arrived on the scene at Pan Pacific Park to provide additional resources and assistance. At 7:00pm, LAPD declared unlawful assembly for the Mid-Wilshire area, and all persons on the street were ordered to disperse. At approximately 8:00pm, LAPD Rescue Task Forces and LAFD responded to four "major fires" in LAPD's West Bureau.



Sources: City News Service. (2020, May 30). "Officers Attacked, Businesses Looted in Downtown Demonstrations." Spectrum News. <https://spectrumnews1.com/ca/la-west/public-safety/2020/05/30/officers-attacked--businesses-looted-in-downtown-demonstrations>

LAist Staff. (2020, May 30). "Anger Over Historic Police Brutality Boils Over In Los Angeles In Saturday's George Floyd Protests." LAist. <https://laist.com/2020/05/30/los-angeles-george-floyd-protests-day-four.php>.

Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). AAR Chrono Time Log. Provided to NPF assessment team by LAPD electronically on October 28, 2020.

Simultaneously, in Mariachi Plaza, about 100 protesters had gathered. This group soon grew to approximately 200 people and began their march to the LAPD's Southeast Station.³⁰⁵ As the march continued, protesters blocked traffic, police cars were set on fire and vandalized, and officers deployed less lethal munitions to attempt to gain control of the crowd.³⁰⁶ By approximately 5:50pm, the group of protesters from Mariachi Plaza had grown to approximately 500 people, and again gained access to the 101 Freeway, where they began vandalizing police vehicles.³⁰⁷

At approximately 3:45pm, Mayor Eric Garcetti announced that a curfew would be in place for downtown Los Angeles on Saturday night, from 8:00pm to 5:30am, to allow for the clean-up of the remaining damage from the previous night's events.³⁰⁸ Shortly thereafter, West Hollywood and Beverly Hills followed suit, instituting curfews of their own.³⁰⁹ By 6:30pm, Mayor Garcetti extended the curfew to the entire city of Los Angeles. By 8:45pm, the following cities instituted curfews as well: Culver City, Pasadena, and Santa Monica.³¹⁰

Despite the curfew, at approximately 9:45pm, there were reports of protesters setting off explosive devices in downtown Los Angeles. Additionally, more than 100 mutual aid officers were deployed from Santa Barbara and Ventura County to provide assistance to LAPD.³¹¹ Later in the evening, the looting and assaults on officers that had plagued the previous night resumed, prompting Governor Gavin Newsom to declare a state of emergency and Mayor Garcetti to request assistance from the California National Guard.³¹²

Sunday, May 31, 2020

The California National Guard arrived early on Sunday morning to provide assistance to the resources who were already present at the protests.³¹³ In the early morning hours, LAPD's Central Bureau requested multiple jail transports, as well as bomb squad assistance.³¹⁴ From approximately 12:30am to 6:30am, several reports of looting occurred at various locations throughout the Central Bureau area.³¹⁵ Later in the morning, LAPD reported multiple pallets of rocks and cinderblocks appeared to be staged in different sites by individuals intent on continuing the looting and break-ins.³¹⁶

At approximately noon, LAPD's West Bureau reported that a group of roughly 300 protesters was on its way to a Councilmember's place of residence and several officers were deployed to provide security services.³¹⁷ By 2:30pm a group of 200 protesters was moving into the West Bureau from the neighboring City of Santa Monica.³¹⁸

³⁰⁵ See footnote 149.

³⁰⁶ LAist Staff. (2020, May 30). "Anger Over Historic Police Brutality Boils Over In Los Angeles In Saturday's George Floyd Protests." LAist. <https://laist.com/2020/05/30/los-angeles-george-floyd-protests-day-four.php>.

³⁰⁷ See footnote 149.

³⁰⁸ See footnote 302.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ See footnote 149.

³¹² See footnote 306.

³¹³ See footnote 149.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

At 2:00pm, LAPD was aware of and monitoring a group of approximately 50 protesters at Pershing Square.³¹⁹ At approximately 5:00pm, protesters made their way from Pershing Square to City Hall, where a number of National Guardsmen and LAPD officers were stationed.³²⁰ During the protest, several police vehicles were vandalized and set on fire.³²¹ By approximately 6:30pm, protesters were said to have grown more aggressive, decreasing the distance between themselves and the Guardsmen.³²² At approximately 7:30pm, LAPD began its attempts to disperse the demonstrators at City Hall.

On May 31, a countywide curfew was instituted from 6:00pm to 5:30am; but, within the city, the curfew did not begin until 8:00pm.³²³ Again, despite the curfew, the evening unfolded in a manner similar to those before it; there were reports of demonstrators wielding baseball bats, breaking windows, attempting to gain access to shops, looting, fires, groups vandalizing vehicles, and general unrest.³²⁴

Monday, June 1, 2020

The early morning hours of June 1 were marred with more burglaries, looting, and unrest.³²⁵

Multiple protests were scheduled to occur on June 1 in various locations throughout Los Angeles, including Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Santa Monica, Hollywood, and West Hollywood.³²⁶ The announcements of these protests caused concern amongst residents and business owners, due to the damage incurred in previous protests in other areas in the city.³²⁷ In the early afternoon, several marches were held in Hollywood. There were also demonstrations in downtown Los Angeles and Westwood.³²⁸ In the Westwood section of the city, a peaceful protest involving approximately 1,000 people occurred outside the Federal Building.³²⁹ At approximately 4:00pm, a faction of this group gained access to the 405 Freeway and blocked motorists from passing through. Officers issued dispersal orders for this crowd.³³⁰

³¹⁹ City News Service. (2020, May 31). "Another Day and Night of Unrest Mars SoCal Protests." NBC Los Angeles, NBC Southern California. <https://www.nbclausangeles.com/news/local/demonstrations-continue-across-socal-as-curfews-expanded/2371795/>

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ See footnote 149.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Scott, Henry (Hank) E. (2020, June 24). "One Demonstration Cancelled, Others Scheduled In and Near West Hollywood." WEHOville. <https://www.wehoville.com/2020/06/01/one-demonstration-cancelled-others-scheduled-in-and-near-west-hollywood/>

³²⁷ Ibid.

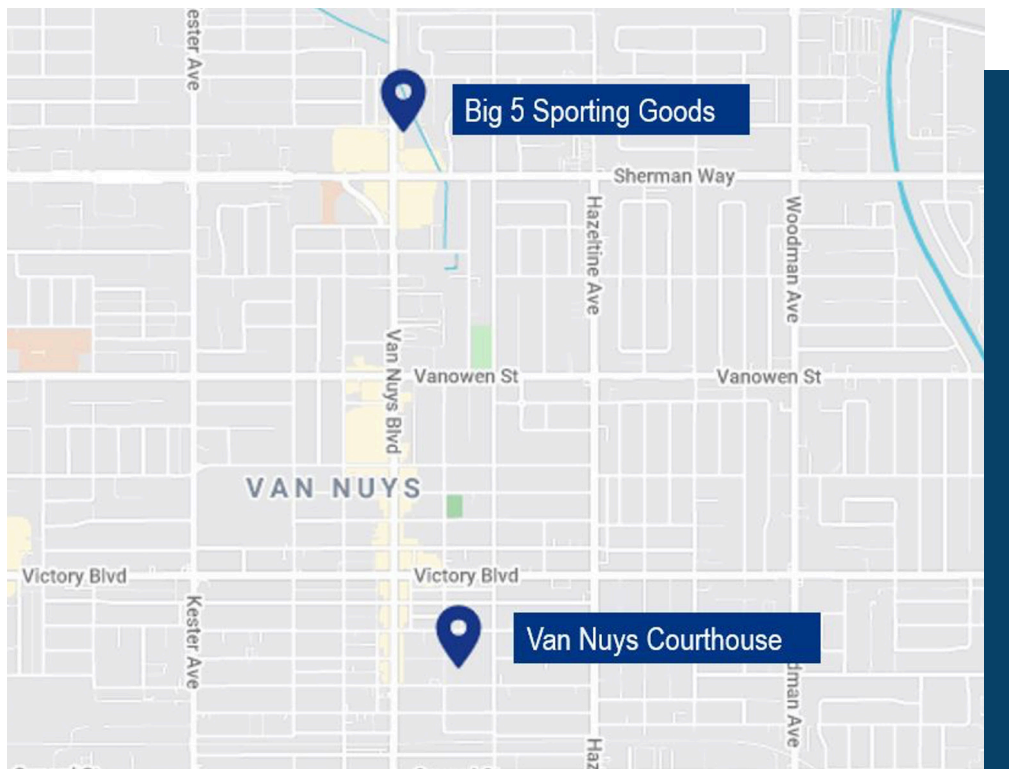
³²⁸ Singgih, Pierce. (2020, June 2). "George Floyd Protest Begins Anew Monday Afternoon in Downtown LA." Daily News. <https://www.dailynews.com/2020/06/01/george-floyd-protest-begins-anew-monday-afternoon-in-downtown-la/>

³²⁹ LAist Staff. (2020, June 1). "Protests In LA Day 6: Floyd's Memory 'Deserves A Better Los Angeles... A Better World'." LAist. https://laist.com/2020/06/01/protests_in_la_angeles_latest_monday_june_1_2020.php

³³⁰ Ibid.

Van Nuys Boulevard

At approximately 3:00pm in Van Nuys, LAPD declared unlawful assembly and ordered the crowds to disperse. At that time, the group was made up of several hundred protesters. Looting commenced once more in Van Nuys at approximately 4:00pm. As these and other protests were underway in Hollywood and Van Nuys, officers concentrated their efforts to uphold the 6:00pm Los Angeles County curfew. LAPD reportedly deployed less lethal munitions into the crowds of looters. There were also reports of fires being set at a strip mall.



Sources: LAist Staff. (2020, June 1). "Protests In LA Day 6: Floyd's Memory 'Deserves A Better Los Angeles... A Better World'." LAist. <https://laist.com/2020/06/01/protests-in-los-angeles-latest-monday-june-1-2020.php>
 Singgih, Pierce. (2020, June 2). "George Floyd Protest Begins Anew Monday Afternoon in Downtown LA." Daily News. <https://www.dailynews.com/2020/06/01/george-floyd-protest-begins-anew-monday-afternoon-in-downtown-la/>

Also, in the afternoon, an LAPD commander took a knee with demonstrators after pleading with them to peacefully protest and to spare businesses from any looting activity.³³¹ A similar scene occurred in front of LAPD Headquarters, where several officers knelt with protesters in a display of solidarity.³³²

³³¹ Singgih, Pierce. (2020, June 2). "George Floyd Protest Begins Anew Monday Afternoon in Downtown LA." Daily News. <https://www.dailynews.com/2020/06/01/george-floyd-protest-begins-anew-monday-afternoon-in-downtown-la/>

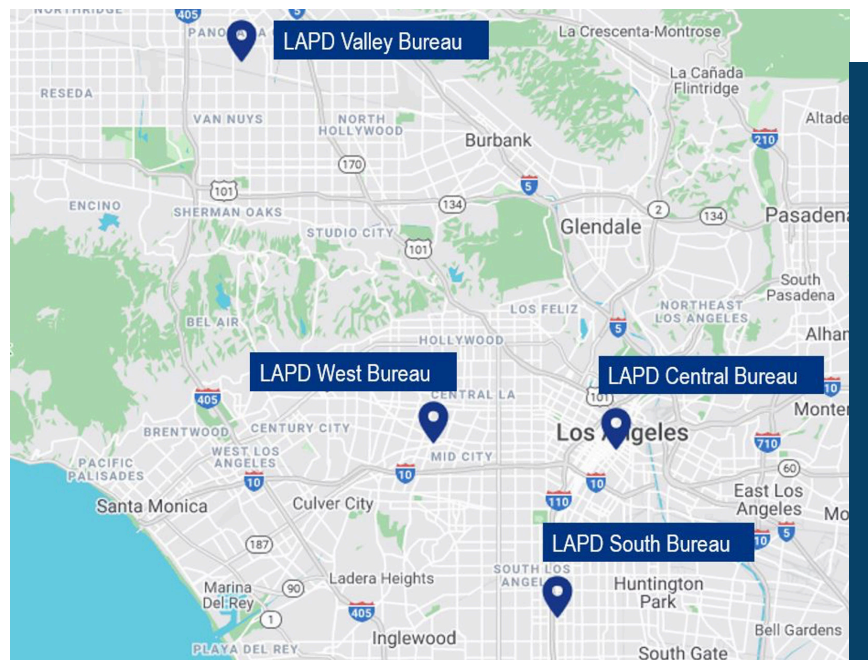
³³² Lloyd, Jonathan. (2020, June 2). "LAPD Officers Join Protesters in Taking a Knee Outside Police Headquarters." NBC Los Angeles. <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/los-angeles-police-protest-knee-lapd-george-floyd/2373032/>

Tuesday, June 2 – Sunday, June 7, 2020

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

Following the preceding 72 hours, which would prove to be the most tumultuous period during the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests, June 2 began with a series of peaceful events.³³³ At approximately 6:00am, roughly 150 demonstrators began their march in the Venice area of Los Angeles.³³⁴ This march remained peaceful as no related disturbances were reported by local residents or business owners.³³⁵ Downtown LA was also the site of two more demonstrations, one of which was held in front of LAPD Headquarters, in the mid-morning hours.³³⁶ LAPD's air unit estimated one group to be roughly 2,000 people.³³⁷ A group of approximately 200 people moved through Beverly Hills close to noon; at roughly the same time, two separate marches were held in Hollywood, one of which made its way into West Hollywood.³³⁸ All of these protests and marches remained peaceful.³³⁹

The tenor of peacefulness continued to permeate through the day. In a display of solidarity similar to those witnessed on Monday, officers took a knee with protesters outside of LAPD Headquarters at approximately 10:30am at a rally in honor of Mr. Floyd.³⁴⁰ Additionally, protesters were seen interacting with National Guardsmen in Hollywood, and Mayor Garcetti was seen taking a knee with protesters in Windsor Square.³⁴¹



³³³ CNS News. (2020, June 2). "Close to 600 People Arrested in Hollywood During George Floyd Protests." KNX 1070 News Radio.

<https://www.radio.com/knx1070/articles/cns-news/single-day-record-arrests-in-hollywood-during-protests>

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ See footnote 149.

³³⁸ Staff Report. (2020, June 3). "Live Updates (June 2, 2020): LA County Declares Curfew for Third Straight Night." NBC Los Angeles.

<https://www.nbcalosangeles.com/news/local/protests-george-floyd-los-angeles-curfew-downtown-la-venice/2373095/>

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Alpert Reyes, Emily, et al. (2020, June 3). "As 'Defund LAPD' Becomes a Rallying Cry, Garcetti Will Seek Cuts up to \$150 Million." Los Angeles Times.

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-03/lapd-budget-unrest-garcetti>

Mayor Garcetti also indicated that it was his direction to minimize LAPD's officers' use of less lethal munitions. In a press conference, Mayor Garcetti stated "I think that we've seen less of any of those tactics and I hope that we can see the most minimal if not zero of those tactics... Those tactics will sometimes be out there, but it is my direction to minimize those and if we can to not use those [tactics] at all especially if there's peaceful protesters."³⁴²

Despite the peace, another countywide curfew was issued, scheduled to run from 6:00pm to 6:00am.³⁴³

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Although the majority of the previous day had been peaceful, throughout the early morning hours of June 3, calls for service related to looting and vandalism were made by community members and business owners at several locations in each of the four bureaus.³⁴⁴

Throughout the day, peaceful protests occurred in West Hollywood,³⁴⁵ Hollywood, and downtown Los Angeles.³⁴⁶ At approximately 3:00pm, a group of protesters began marching toward Mayor Garcetti's residence in Windsor Square. Another group of demonstrators outside City Hall and the Hall of Justice grew from approximately 3,000 to 8,000 people by 4:00pm, according to LAPD's air unit.³⁴⁷

Cognizant that the peacefulness during the daytime hours would likely change again once it got dark, Los Angeles County issued another curfew, which would be instituted from 9:00pm to 5:00am.³⁴⁸ The City of Los Angeles announced its own curfew, this time matching the hours of the county.³⁴⁹

At approximately 8:00pm, LAPD reported that the crowd near City Hall grew hostile and had begun throwing projectiles at officers.³⁵⁰ Over the next couple of hours, LAPD officers attempted to contain and detain the protesters, who were now in violation of curfew.³⁵¹ However, each time LAPD tried to encircle the crowd, protesters would separate into smaller groups, change locations, and join with new groups, repeatedly evading LAPD's attempts at containment.³⁵² By the end of the evening, roughly 100 peaceful protesters were arrested in Grand Park by LASD for violating the county curfew.³⁵³

Additionally, on June 3, the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners posted a news release on the LAPD website entitled "Demands for Law Enforcement Reform," which detailed plans for "greater accountability, increased transparency, and a strengthening of public trust," to demonstrate that residents' concerns had been heard.³⁵⁴

³⁴² Winton, Richard, et al. (2020, June 3). "LAPD Chief Michel Moore's Comments on Looters Create Political Firestorm." Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-03/lapd-chief-moores-comments-on-looters-create-political-firestorm-even-after-he-apologized>

³⁴³ See footnote 341.

³⁴⁴ See footnote 149.

³⁴⁵ NBC Southern California. (2020, June 3). "Live Updates (June 3, 2020): Protesters March in Downtown LA, West Hollywood, Orange County." NBC Los Angeles. <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/southern-california-protests-marches-george-floyd-racism-justice-los-angeles-orange-county/2373840/>

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ See footnote 149.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ See footnote 345.

³⁵⁴ Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners. (2020, June 3). "Demands for Law Enforcement Reform." https://www.lapdonline.org/police_commission/news_view/66600

Thursday, June 4, 2020

Although there were still some reports of looting in the early morning hours, June 4 saw a marked decrease in protests, looting, and criminal activity.³⁵⁵ Even though a number of protests and marches occurred in each of the four bureaus, June 4 unfolded without incident. Two separate protests, involving as many as 400 people occurred in the Valley area; a series of five protests ranging from approximately 100 to 700 people³⁵⁶ took place in the downtown area, including one at City Hall³⁵⁷ and one in Grand Park;³⁵⁸ a Peace March that began at approximately noon and lasted about four hours concluded with no issues in South LA;³⁵⁹ and, two separate peaceful protests—one involving a group of approximately 300 people at the Getty house and the other involving approximately 500 people at the University of California, Los Angeles—took place in West LA.³⁶⁰

In only one instance, a protest of approximately 100 people grew contentious as business owners in the area banded together to protect their businesses and had a heated exchange with protesters to which police responded, but no further issues were reported.³⁶¹

Based on the overarching peacefulness of the previous two days, Mayor Garcetti announced that there was no further need for a citywide curfew to remain in effect.³⁶²

At approximately 7:00pm, in front of a group of protesters that had grown to approximately 800 people³⁶³ outside of LAPD Headquarters and City Hall, LAPD Chief Moore took a knee in solidarity with protesters.³⁶⁴ Chief Moore also used the time to address the crowd,³⁶⁵ which by approximately 8:00pm, had grown to approximately 4,000 protesters and some vehicles. After Chief Moore's comments, the number of protesters slowly diminished.³⁶⁶ Although there were some reports of protesters throwing water bottles at officers, the crowds remained mostly peaceful, and the night was largely uneventful.³⁶⁷

³⁵⁵ See footnote 149.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ NBC Southern California. (2020, June 4). "Live Protest Updates (June 4, 2020): Several Communities Cancel Curfews." NBC Los Angeles. <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/george-floyd-protests-memorial-los-angeles-california-curfew/2374713/>

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ See footnote 149.

Friday, June 5, 2020

Although there were some reports of criminal activity in the early morning hours, the trend from the previous day largely continued as violence, looting, and vandalism declined.³⁶⁸ Throughout the city, thousands of protesters gathered at locations such as Los Angeles City Hall, LAPD Headquarters, West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, and Hollywood. All these assemblies were peaceful.³⁶⁹ Three additional protests of approximately 300 people each proceeded without incident occurred also occurred in the Valley.³⁷⁰ A small protest formed in the South Bureau where no issues were reported, and the West Bureau reported on six separate protests throughout the bureau, to which no resources were assigned, as they had all remained peaceful.³⁷¹

There were two incidents which caused some tumult, but were handled quickly.³⁷² At approximately 3:24pm, a protester sent a threatening text to 911, reportedly stating, “we are the peace rally we are going to kill you.”³⁷³ An individual in another protest sought out officers to say that someone in the crowd was in possession of knives or a similar type weapon.³⁷⁴ Officers detained the individual in question at approximately 4:00pm.³⁷⁵

At approximately 4:00pm, a crowd of approximately 1,500 people gathered outside the Hall of Justice and began peacefully marching around the downtown area.³⁷⁶

Community Solidarity Vigil

At approximately the same time, in anticipation of a candlelight vigil being hosted by LAPD in honor of Mr. Floyd outside of LAPD Headquarters, a crowd of approximately 2,000 people had gathered. The vigil was held “in support of community solidarity,” and in that spirit, the groups in attendance remained peaceful. During the vigil, Chief Moore addressed the community, stating, “in the days after that event, after that murder, after that tragedy, after watching the horrific scene and hearing his pleas, and the lack of compassion and humanity of just simply recognizing another individual, tore at the very heart of what policing stands for... Tore at the very essence of our duty to protect, to serve, to treat each individual as just that.” Chief Moore spoke with some of the vigil’s attendees following his remarks to the crowd.

Sources: KTLA Digital Staff and Mary Beth McDade. (2020, June 5). “LAPD Holds Vigil with Religious Leaders amid Unrest over Death of George Floyd.” KTLA. <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/lapd-to-hold-vigil-amid-unrest-over-death-of-george-floyd/>
Los Angeles Police Department. (2020). AAR Chrono Time Log. Provided to NPF team by LAPD electronically on October 28, 2020.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ City News Service, and Staff Report. (2020, June 6). “More than Three Dozen George Floyd-Inspired Protests Planned around Region Today.” Daily News. <https://www.dailynews.com/2020/06/06/more-than-three-dozen-george-floyd-inspired-protests-planned-around-region-today/>

³⁷⁰ See footnote 149.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

Saturday, June 6, 2020

At least 17 protests were scheduled to take place throughout the city of Los Angeles on June 6.³⁷⁷ The protests began as early as 8:00am and were scheduled to continue throughout the afternoon in various locations.³⁷⁸ The groups ranged in size from approximately 100 in Hollywood,³⁷⁹ to as many as 8,000 in front of City Hall.³⁸⁰ As the different groups marched, LAPD facilitated their movements, blocking traffic and temporarily closing roads as necessary.³⁸¹ More importantly, the protests occurred without any reports of violence, aggression, property damage, or other incidents.³⁸²

Sunday, June 7, 2020

Downtown Los Angeles and Beverly Hills saw demonstrations of their own,³⁸³ and thousands of people gathered in Compton to march as well.³⁸⁴ Likewise, at approximately 1:30pm, LAPD's South Bureau reported a caravan of vehicles moving through the area, towards City Hall.³⁸⁵ LAPD's Central Bureau later reported the caravan of vehicles moving past Union Station, and toward LAPD Headquarters and City Hall.³⁸⁶ The group of vehicles numbered roughly 300-400 and made its way through the Central Bureau without incident and obeying traffic laws.³⁸⁷ LAPD's West Bureau reported on a crowd of around 4,000 people that had gathered in Hollywood; by approximately 5:45pm, this crowd had more than tripled, and was now estimated to be 15,000 protesters.³⁸⁸ By 7:45pm, another large gathering of up to 15,000 people had formed in West Hollywood.³⁸⁹ Later in the evening, demonstrators gathered for a candlelight vigil of their own on Hollywood Boulevard, and peacefully dispersed afterward.³⁹⁰

In contrast to just one week prior, there were no reports of conflicts, vandalism and looting, rioting, or aggression. Based on the increasing peacefulness and the decreasing conflicts, the California National Guard was also entirely demobilized.³⁹¹

³⁷⁷ City News Service and Staff Report. (2020, June 6). "More than Three Dozen George Floyd-Inspired Protests Planned around Region Today." Daily News. <https://www.dailynews.com/2020/06/06/more-than-three-dozen-george-floyd-inspired-protests-planned-around-region-today/>

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ LAist Staff. (2020, June 6). "Saturday's LA Protests: Here's What Happened." LAist. https://laist.com/2020/06/06/live_updates_day_11_of_protests_in_la.php

³⁸⁰ See footnote 149.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Braslow, Samuel. (2020, June 8). "Black Lives Matter Estimates That as Many as 100,000 Protesters Gathered in Hollywood on Sunday." Los Angeles Magazine. <https://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/hollywood-protest-sunday/>

³⁸⁴ Pierce, Tony. (2020, June 6). "A Timeline of Events: How L.A. Protests for George Floyd Played Out." Los Angeleno. <https://losangeleno.com/features/la-protests-timeline-george-floyd/>

³⁸⁵ See footnote 149.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

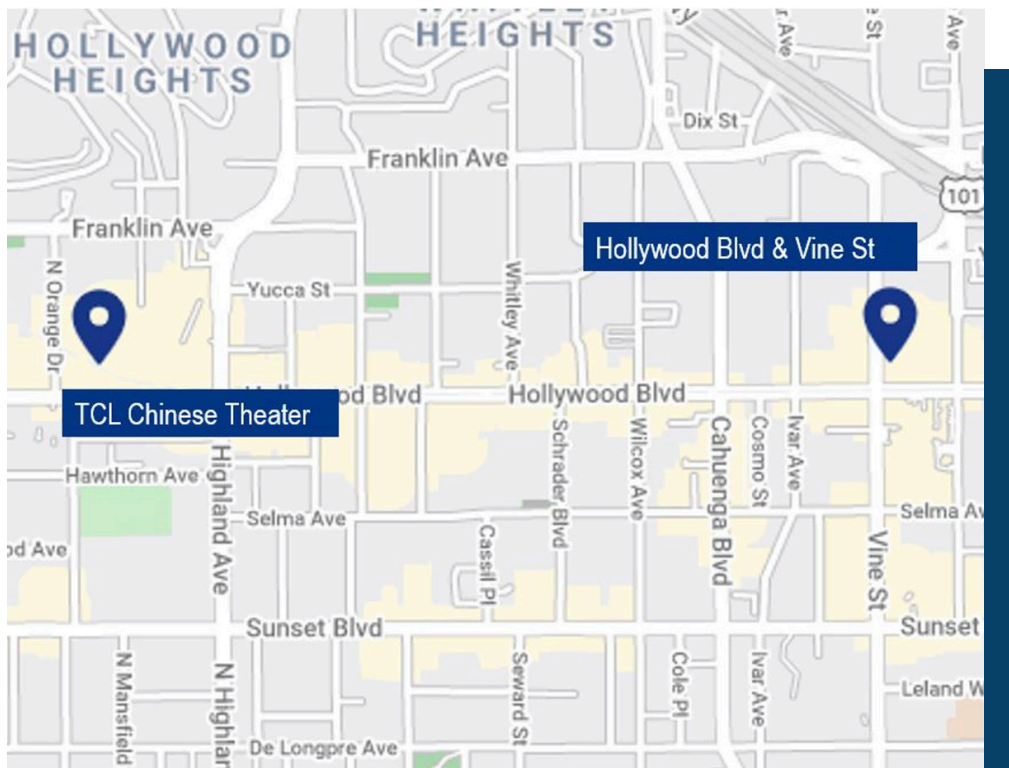
³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Email from City of Los Angeles Executive Officer to NPF assessment team. February 17, 2021.

Hollywood Demonstration

On June 7, the city saw its largest protest related to the death of Mr. Floyd. Estimates range from 20,000 people, to 50,000, to as many as 100,000 people gathered in Hollywood to rally. The gathering was entirely peaceful.



Sources: Pierce, Tony. (2020, June 6). "A Timeline of Events: How L.A. Protests for George Floyd Played Out."

Los Angeleno. <https://losangeleno.com/features/la-protests-timeline-george-floyd/>

Braslow, Samuel. (2020, June 8). "Black Lives Matter Estimates That as Many as 100,000 Protesters Gathered in Hollywood on Sunday." Los Angeles Magazine.

<https://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/hollywood-protest-sunday/>

Appendix D: NPF Staff Members



Frank Straub PhD
Director Center for Mass
Violence Response Studies
NPF

Is the Director of the National Police Foundation's Center for Mass Violence Response Studies (CMVRS). Under his leadership, the NPF has conducted in-depth studies of targeted mass violence events in San Bernardino, Kalamazoo, Orlando, Parkland, and the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. He has also led reviews of the police response to civil unrest in several cities. It was under his leadership, that the NPF began including mental health practitioners on its review teams to ensure counseling services or referrals were available to responders, survivors and witnesses. Dr. Straub is the project manager for the national Averted School Violence project, a national database, funded by the US Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. He has also led a DHS funded Countering Violent Extremism project in Boston, MA. Prior to joining the National Police Foundation, Dr. Straub served for more than 30-years in federal, state and local law enforcement. He led law enforcement/public safety agencies in New York, Indiana and the State of Washington. During his tenure in White Plains, New York he established the first police-mental health co-responder team in the state. In Spokane, he established the first cross system mental health steering committee and ensured that all officers received a minimum of 40-hours crisis intervention training. The SPD peer support team provided assistance to law enforcement agencies in eastern Washington and western Idaho. Dr. Straub is a Non-Resident Fellow at West Point's Center for Combatting Terrorism, an Adjunct Professor in Michigan State University's Department of Psychiatry; a Graduate Faculty Scholar, University of Central Florida's Department of Psychology; and, a member of Yale University's Department of Psychiatry and Law's Working Group on Social Isolation and Extremism. Dr. Straub is a licensed masters-level psychologist in Michigan. He is serves as a clinician on the Calhoun County Sheriff's Department's Peer Support Team. In collaboration with UCF RESTORES research and treatment clinic he advises law enforcement agencies across the country on crisis intervention and peer support. Dr. Straub holds a B.A. in Psychology, a M.A. in Forensic Psychology, and a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice. He has authored articles and reports on school violence, critical incident response, community policing, and youth violence prevention. He speaks regularly at national and international conferences, has participated in numerous Congressional and White House briefings, and is a frequently invited commentator and analyst for national and international media outlets.



Jennifer Zeunik
Director Local Programs
NPF

Is the Director of Local Programs for the National Police Foundation, where she provides leadership and oversight for the organization, as well as project, financial and staff management. She has extensive experience in public administration, law enforcement organizations and practices, non-profit management, government grants and contracts and organizational leadership. She is responsible for PF's portfolio of state and local programs, including critical incident and after-action reviews, organizational assessments and studies, strategic planning, management studies, training and technical assistance and other organizational change services. Throughout her career, Ms. Zeunik has worked closely with a variety of stakeholder organizations in policing program and policy areas. She works with federal, state and local executives, law enforcement and public safety command staff to leverage evidence-based strategies to address critical contemporary policing issues. Her goal is to advance the health, safety and performance of law enforcement officers and organizations and the communities they serve by providing evidence-based, data-supported resources and solutions.



Travis Taniguchi PhD
Director Research NPF

Is Director of Research at the National Police Foundation. His research interests include program and policy evaluation, crime and place, and the spatial distribution of crime. Dr. Taniguchi has extensive experience conducting field-based experiments of police practices and has worked with many law enforcement agencies (LEAs) across the United States. He has led numerous large-scale surveys of law enforcement agencies including the 2016 Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) Body-Worn Camera Supplement, 2016 LEMAS, 2018 Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, and 2018 Census of Law Enforcement Training Academies. Before joining the National Police Foundation, Dr. Taniguchi worked as a research criminologist in the Policing Research Program in the Division for Applied Justice Research at RTI International. He has a bachelor's degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice from Chaminade University of Honolulu and a master's and PhD in Criminal Justice from Temple University.



Ben Gorban
Senior Project Associate
NPF

Is a Senior Project Associate who works on incident reviews of public safety responses to mass violence/terrorism attacks and mass demonstrations, school security issues, operational assessments, and other law-enforcement related projects. He has over nine years of experience supporting national-scope law-enforcement related projects including the provision of technical assistance and policy analysis support on projects related to community policing and the role of social media in law enforcement, countering violent extremism, cyber crime, school security, and traffic safety. He has worked on projects with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), as well as state and local governments and law enforcement agencies.



Katherine Hoogesteyn PhD
Research Associate NPF

Joined the National Police Foundation as a Research Associate in January 2021. She holds a Ph.D. in Legal Psychology from Maastricht University (the Netherlands) and Portsmouth University (U.K) and a B.A in Psychology from Florida International University. Katherine has over seven years of research experience in areas related to investigative interviewing practices, including tactics for information elicitation and rapport-building. Her primary interest is on science-based policing and working alongside police practitioners on how to most effectively translate scientific findings into practice.



Christine Johnson
Project Associate NPF

Is a Project Associate at the National Police Foundation, supporting the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) Preventing Violence Against Law Enforcement and Ensuring Officer Resilience and Survivability (VALOR) Officer Safety and Wellness project, working on incident reviews of public safety responses to civil unrest, among other law enforcement-related areas. Christine has over five years of experience working in the criminal justice field, specifically related to implementing FISMA (Federal Information Security Modernization Act) compliant systems for information sharing purposes, project management for grant funded programs through BJS's NCHIP (National Criminal History Improvement Program), enterprises, and privacy. Prior to joining the National Police Foundation, Christine served as the Strategic Analysis Specialist for the DC Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), and as a Special Investigator for Keypoint Government Solutions.



Yukun Yang
Research Data Scientist
NPF

Is a Research Data Scientist at the National Police Foundation. He has comprehensive knowledge in data science and extensive experience in computational social science, especially the research with social media data. He works closely with other staff within the NPF and helps identify data needs and opportunities, adopt the best practices for data collection and data wrangling, conduct rigid data analysis and render visually appealing data visualizations. His work tackles complex problems with innovative data approaches, enabling the NPF to undertake more sophisticated research and generate new learning and insights with new datasets and advanced analytical tools. Before his work at the NPF, he earned his M.S. in Information Science at UNC-Chapel Hill and worked as a social media data analyst at the Digital Innovation Lab.

